Hearings wrap up

Legal experts praise Jackson during final day of Senate hearings. **NEWS, PAGE 4**

Immigration process

Biden administration finalizes plans to overhaul asylum process. **NEWS, PAGE 4**

An unemployment low

Unemployment benefit claims fall to lowest level in 52 years. **NEWS, PAGE 8**

Much warmer

Partly sunny and mild; high of 63. **SPORTS, PAGE 8**

Hartford Courant

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WAR IN UKRAINE

Allies pledge more aid for Ukraine

But Zelenskyy asks for stronger weapons at summit

By Chris Megerian, Lorne Cook and Aamer Madhani
Associated Press

BRUSSELS — President Joe Biden and Western allies pledged new sanctions and humanitarian aid on Thursday in response to Vladimir Putin's assault on Ukraine, but their offers fell short of the more robust military assistance that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pleaded for in a pair of live-video appearances.

Biden also announced the U.S. would welcome up to 100,000 Ukrainian refugees though he said many probably prefer to stay closer to home, and provide an additional $1 billion in food, medicine, water and other supplies.

The Western leaders spent Thursday crafting next steps to counter Russia's monthold invasion and huddling over how they might respond should Putin deploy chemical, biological or even a nuclear weapon. They met in a trio of emergency summits that had them shuttling across Brussels for back-to-back-to-back meetings of NATO, the Group of Seven industrialized nations and the 27-member European Council.

Biden, in an early evening news conference after the meetings, warned that a chemical attack by Russia "would trigger a response in kind."

"You're asking whether NATO would cross. We'd make that decision at the time," Biden said.

However, a White House official said later that did not imply any shift in the U.S. position against direct military action in Ukraine. Biden and NATO allies have stressed that the U.S. and NATO would not put ground troops inside Ukraine.

The official was not authorized to comment publicly by name and spoke only on condition of anonymity.

Turn to Ukraine, *Page 3*

STATE POLICE GRADUATION



Freshly graduated Connecticut State Police Trooper Jessica Keogh, left, and her fiance, Terrance Williams, are overcome with emotion after hugging at the conclusion of a ceremony Thursday in which 53 recruits graduated. **MARK MIRKO PHOTOS/HARTFORD COURANT**

'We need you now more than ever'

Trooper recruits graduate, but eight short due to cheating scandal



Members of the Connecticut State Police 131 Training Troop perform a call and response chant at the start of the ceremony. Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz said the 131st Training Troop, which included 15 women, represented one of the state police's most diverse units.

By Jesse Leavenworth | Hartford Courant

The state police code of honor, which every recruit must memorize, took on extra significance Thursday with the graduation of 53 trooper trainees, eight fewer than when the class started due to a cheating scandal.

Asked after the ceremony at the state Armory in Hartford how the ouster of their fellow recruits affected members of the 131st Training Troop, public safety Commissioner James Rovella said they emerged stronger.

"Everything makes them stronger," Rovella said.

Their united voices booming in the cavernous stone building, the class recited the code of honor, which says in part, "I am a Connecticut State Trooper/ A soldier of the law/ To me is entrusted the honor of the Department."

Gov. Ned Lamont spoke to the graduates and family and friends packed into bleachers.

"We need you now more than ever," Lamont said.

Turn to Troopers, *Page 2*

Fentanyl seizure among largest

Hartford men charged in one of biggest busts in Connecticut history

By Taylor Hartz
Hartford Courant

HARTFORD — Two Hartford residents from the Dominican Republic were charged with operating a massive drug trafficking scheme that led to one of the largest one-time seizures of fentanyl in Connecticut history.

Investigators found the two men in possession of "massive" amounts of drugs that they planned to sell: 16 kilograms of fentanyl, 30,000 fentanyl pills, 1,000 bags of packaged-to-sell fentanyl, 75 grams of heroin and 41 grams of crack, according to a statement released Thursday morning by United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut Leonard C. Boyle and Brian D. Boyle, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration for New England.

Erasmo "Wally Rosario" Rosario-Hernandez and Wily Arias De La Cruz, both 38, were indicted by a federal grand jury in New Haven on Tuesday on a slew of charges connected to their alleged drug trafficking following an investigation by the DEA's Hartford Task Force.

Leonard C. Boyle called the case "one of the largest one-time seizures of fentanyl that we've seen in Connecticut" and thanked the DEA task force for their work to get the deadly drugs off the streets and, in turn, save lives.

"As fentanyl continues to be the leading cause of overdose deaths in Connecticut and around the country, we are determined to do everything to stop the flow of this deadly drug into and around our state," he said in a statement.

Fentanyl is a deadly synthetic opioid that is 80 to 100 times stronger than morphine, according to the DEA. The more frequent use of fentanyl as an addition to, or substitute for less-potent heroin, has contributed significantly to drug overdose deaths nationwide.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, between April 2020 and April 2021, the number of overdose deaths nationwide rose 28.5%.

Brian D. Boyle, DEA special

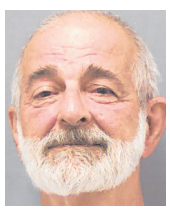
Turn to Fentanyl, *Page 3*

Career criminal pleads guilty to political murder-for-hire

Stamford man with mob ties may face life in prison for NJ plot

By Edmund H. Mahony
Hartford Courant

George Bratsenis, a serial bank robber from Stamford and onetime strong arm man for the mob, will likely spend the rest of his life in prison after pleading guilty in federal court Thursday to taking thousands of dollars for carrying out a political murder-for-hire in New Jersey.



Bratsenis

Bratsenis, 73, admitted he took what federal prosecutors described as "thousands of dollars in cash" from well-known New Jersey political operative Sean Caddle in return for killing Michael Galdieri, another political operator who had worked with Caddle in the past.

New Jersey authorities, who have been building the murder case for months, have been silent about a motive. And Bratsenis, balding with close cropped white hair and a matching beard, revealed nothing new Thursday.

He appeared in court in Newark through a video connection from the prison where he is being held and answered, simply "Yes, your honor" when asked repeatedly if he understood the legal ramifications of admitting to a murder. When it was over, he told U.S. District Judge John Vasquez, "You all have a nice day. Take it easy."

In response to questions from the prosecution, Bratsenis admitted that he traveled from Connecticut to New Jersey where he met Caddle on April 20, 2014, and agreed to the murder. Two days later, he acknowledged that he and Bomani Africa, a bank robbery partner from Philadelphia who he met in a New Jersey prison,

Turn to Bratsenis, *Page 3*

State's COVID-19 numbers up; is a spike coming?

Connecticut has seen a slight rise in its positivity rate and a flattening case count over the past week in what experts say could be early signs of a coronavirus spike. **Connecticut, Page 1**

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FROM PAGE ONE

Troopers

from Page 1

"It's been a tough couple of years."

Sworn state police personnel, not including the 53 trooper trainees, total 895, down from a peak of 1,283 in 2009 under then-Republican Gov. M. Jodi Rell. Gov. Dannel P. Malloy battled with state police over the state-mandated minimum of 1,248 troopers, and that number was erased from state law in a budget implementation bill during Malloy's tenure.

Also, state police face a wave of retirements before July 1, when changes in pension and health benefits will begin as cost-saving measures. Employees who retire before that date will keep the more-lucrative benefits they currently have. Eight troopers and supervisors retired as of March 1 in advance of the upcoming benefit changes. In addition, 52 troopers and supervisors have declared they will retire on April 1.

Another training class is to start in two weeks and another is to follow closely on that one. Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz said the class that graduated Thursday was one of the most diverse. State police Sgt. Ryan Maynard, recruit coordinator at the academy, said the class included 15 women and 11 people of color.

None of the speakers directly mentioned the cheating scandal. According to an internal investigation, an exam that was supposed to be administered in person on Jan. 10 was uploaded online that morning in case some recruits needed to take it remotely.

The eight recruits who were fired for cheating opened the test online and began filling it out before the allotted two-hour testing period, investigators found. Witnesses reported two recruits were cheating and six others confessed after a commander threatened to have IT look through their computers.

The ceremony, however, was marked by pride and military order — polished brass, spit-shined boots and the blue and gold of Connecticut state troopers' distinct uniforms. Troopers from surrounding states also attended.

In his remarks, Rovella talked about a recent conversation he had at an Old Saybrook Starbucks. A man who described himself as a professor who studied workforce issues recognized Rovella and told him that in his experience, state troopers and other first responders were "average" workers.

Feeling "poked" by the academic, Rovella said he recited a list of questions that all began with, "Do you think it's average," including the ability to make split-second, life or death decisions and a dedication to a job that requires long hours and separation from family.

"They're heroes," Rovella said. "Their families are heroes."

Trooper Trainee Cameron DeFeo, the class speaker and son of a retired state trooper, talked about inspections during the 28-week training, the impossibility of everyone passing inspections and how class members came together to support each other. DeFeo recited the class motto, "When the pain fades, pride remains."

"All of our pride remained and grew stronger," he said.

Family members, many of them former and current law enforcement officers, pinned badges on the graduates. The newly minted troopers received their Troop assignments and now begin nine weeks of on-the-job training.

Jesse Leavenworth can be reached at jleavenworth@courant.com



Members of the Connecticut State Police 131 Training Troop enter the state Armory in Hartford during a ceremony Thursday in which 53 recruits graduated. Not including the recruits, sworn state police personnel number 895, down from a peak of 1,283 in 2009. **MARK MIRKO PHOTOS/HARTFORD COURANT**



Connecticut State Trooper Sierra Thibault and James Rovella, commissioner of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, salute each other.

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LOTTERY
Thursday, March 24

PLAY3 DAY
1 2 6 **WB:** 2

PLAY4 DAY
7 2 6 6 **WB:** 7

The late numbers were not drawn in time for this edition. For results, please visit courant.com/lottery.

WEDNESDAY'S LATE NUMBERS

PLAY3 NIGHT
1 7 7 **WB:** 5

PLAY4 NIGHT
6 8 4 9 **WB:** 0

CASH 5
9 24 29 31 33

LUCKY FOR LIFE
1 3 28 34 42 **LB:** 6

POWERBALL
31 32 37 38 48 **PB:** 24 **PP:** 2

Tonight's est. Lotto jackpot: $1.5 million

Tonight's est. Mega Millions jackpot: $50 million

Saturday's est. Powerball jackpot: $181 million







FROM PAGE ONE

Embattled ex-AAU coach could soon be released

Danny Lawhorn awaits trial over allegations of sex assault during time in Bria Holmes program

By Edmund H. Mahony
Hartford Courant

Danny Lawhorn, accused of sexually assaulting three teenaged girls who played for an elite basketball program he coached, could be released from jail as early as next week while awaiting trial, according to a decision Thursday by a federal judge.

Lawhorn, who formerly coached young women hoping to win athletic scholarships in the Bria Holmes' AAU girls basketball program, has been denied bail as a risk to the community since his arrest in October. U.S. Magistrate Judge Robert Richardson agreed Thursday afternoon to grant Lawhorn release on bond after federal prosecutors, Lawhorn's lawyer and the federal probation office agreed on conditions of home confinement that the court said would adequately protect the public.


Lawhorn

Parties to the case said Lawhorn could remain in custody for another week or so while monitoring equipment is obtained and his release is coordinated with prosecutors and others in the state court system because of related state charges he faces.

Lawhorn is accused federally of assaulting one young woman and faces state charges in the two other assaults. In addition, in the course of his two state arrests, Lawhorn was allegedly found to have been in possession of distribution weight quantities of cocaine and fentanyl.

Federal prosecutors continued to oppose Lawhorn's release Thursday, which marked his fourth attempt at bond since his arrest on the federal charge in October.

Among the release conditions imposed by Richardson are requirements that Lawhorn be subject to home confinement with electronic monitoring, be kept under continuous supervision by court-appointed custodians, be prohibited from associating with minors and have his internet use subject to surveillance software. He is also required to look for work, but he can't be employed in the company of minors.

Lawhorn is accused of using his position as a coach and advocate to coerce sex acts over the last four years from three teenagers hoping to hone their basketball skills and impress college recruiters. It is a crime under state law for a coach to use his position of authority to coerce women under age 18.

Lawhorn faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years if convicted of a federal sex offense.

The alleged assaults occurred separately over multiple years and involved girls who were traveling with Lawhorn for basketball tournaments across the state and country, records show.

The girl at the center of the federal case is an international high school student. She stayed at Lawhorn's Hartford home while she played for the Bria Holmes program, according to authorities.

Jon Schoenhorn, Lawhorn's lawyer, has argued, among other things, that the charges against Lawhorn will not hold up. On one hand, Schoenhorn argues that the age of consent under Connecticut law is 16. He also claims that the girl who was is at the center of the federal case never played on Lawhorn's team, which means he cannot be guilty of using his authority over her as a coach to coerce her into a sex act.

The prosecution claimed last year in arguments for detention that Lawhorn allegedly admitted during a tape recorded interview with Hartford detectives at the time of his arrest that he exercised control over the 17-year old international player and even recognized that he was engaged in sexual misconduct. Police and prosecutors allege Lawhorn pressured some young women to give him massages and that turned into sexual assaults.

"Most significantly, in a recorded interview with law enforcement, the defendant admitted that he trained (the international player) and that she played on his basketball team," federal prosecutors argued in a memo. "In referring to the girls that stayed in his home, he stated, 'I run a program. ... I'm trying to get you a scholarship. ... although you're not as good as you're supposed to be, and no colleges want you now, I gave you a place to stay, right, I gave another person a place to stay, you all come, you all train with me, and I talk to these colleges for you.'

"Later in the interview, the defendant described some of the sexual acts and sexual contact he engaged in with (a player) after he asked for a massage on June 13, 2021. He suggested he soon realized his actions were wrong, stating, 'What really kicked in my mind was yo bro she's 17 ... and like she playing on my (expletive) team.' "

Ukraine

from Page 1

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance agreed Thursday to send equipment to Ukraine to help protect it against a chemical weapons attack.

Zelenskyy, while thankful for the newly promised help, made clear to the Western allies he needed far more than they're currently willing to give.

"One percent of all your planes, 1 percent of all your tanks," Zelenskyy asked members of the NATO alliance. "We can't just buy those. When we will have all this, it will give us, just like you, 100% security."

Biden said more aid was on its way. But the Western leaders were treading carefully so as not to further escalate the conflict beyond the borders of Ukraine.

"NATO has made a choice to support Ukraine in this war without going to war with Russia," said French President Emmanuel Macron. "Therefore we have decided to intensify our ongoing work to prevent any escalation and to get organized in case there is an escalation."

At the same time, Washington will expand its sanctions on Russia, targeting members of the country's parliament along with defense contractors. The U.S. said it will also work with other Western nations to ensure gold reserves held by Russia's central bank are subject to existing sanctions.

Biden also said Russia should be removed from the G-20 organization of industrialized and developing nations, but he said that if the member nations do not agree to the measure, then Ukraine should be allowed to participate in the group's meetings in the future.


Anti-tank barricades are placed on a street as preparation for a possible Russian offensive in Odesa, Ukraine, on Thursday. **PETROS GIANNAKOURIS/AP**

Such a move would echo the 2014 decision of a smaller group of the world's largest economies to eject Russia from the Group of Eight to punish it for its invasion and occupation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

Ukraine accused Moscow on Thursday of forcibly taking hundreds of thousands of civilians from shattered Ukrainian cities to Russia, where some may be used as "hostages" to pressure Kyiv to give up.

Lyudmyla Denisova, Ukraine's ombudsperson, said 402,000 people, including 84,000 children, have been taken against their will.

The Kremlin gave nearly identical numbers for those who have been relocated, but said they wanted to go to Russia. Ukraine's rebel-controlled eastern regions are predominantly Russian-speaking, and many there have supported close ties to Moscow.

A month into the invasion, meanwhile, the two sides traded heavy blows in what has become a devastating war of attrition. Ukraine's navy said it sank a large Russian landing ship near Berdyansk that had been used to bring in armored vehicles. Russia claimed to have taken the eastern town of Izyum.

In Chernihiv, where an airstrike this week destroyed a crucial bridge, a city official, Olexander Lomako, said a "humanitarian catastrophe" is unfolding as Russian forces target food storage places. He said about 130,000 people are left in the besieged city, about half its prewar population.

Russia said it will offer safe passage starting Friday to 67 ships from 15 foreign countries that are stranded in Ukrainian ports because of the danger of shelling and mines.

Biden is to scheduled to visit Poland on Friday, where energy and refugee issues are expected to be at the center of talks with President Andrzej Duda.

The New York Times contributed.

Fentanyl

from Page 1

agent in charge, said the agency is cracking down on fentanyl trafficking, given the spike in fatal overdoses since the rise in the drug's popularity. In 2020, 1,374 people died of a drug overdose in Connecticut, according to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, and 85% of those deaths were caused by fentanyl. In January, a 13-year-old Hartford boy overdosed on fentanyl at the Sport and Medical Sciences Academy, where police said they found nearly 40 bags of fentanyl stashed in multiple locations within the school. After a search warrant was executed at the juvenile's residence, approximately 100 additional bags of fentanyl were found, according to the Hartford police.

"Fentanyl is causing deaths in record numbers, and DEA's top priority is to aggressively pursue anyone who distributes this poison in order to profit and destroy lives," he said. "Illegal drug distribution ravages the very foundations of our families and communities so every time we take fentanyl off the streets, lives are saved."

Early on the morning of March 11, investigators in Hartford stopped a car that De La Cruz was riding in. In it, they found two bricks of fentanyl weighing more than a kilogram.

A few hours later, investigators searched Rosario-Hernandez's house at 4 Magnolia St. and found another kilogram of the drug, 16,000 fentanyl pills — which were disguised as oxycodone pills — and a high capacity magazine and an automatic rifle.

During their search, a K9 officer trained to detect narcotics alerted investigators to Rosario-Hernandez's Mercedes, which was parked outside his home. Inside the Mercedes, they found another 14 kilograms of fentanyl, another 16,000 pills, 1,000 bags of pre-packaged fentanyl, 75 grams of heroin, 41 grams of crack and more firearms, according to the statement.

There were four assault-style rifles, two handguns and ammunition in the car. Investigators also found a few fake IDs with Rosario's photo on them and about $66,000 in cash, according to the statement.

Both men were arrested that day and have been in federal custody since.

They are both charged with possession of more than 400 grams of fentanyl with intent to distribute and conspiracy to distribute more than 400 grams of fentanyl. Each of these charges carries a minimum prison term of 10 years and a maximum sentence of life in prison, if convicted, according to Leonard C. Boyle.

Rosario-Hernandez is also charged with possession of heroin with intent to sell, possession of crack with intent to sell and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, according to court records, which will add at least five years to his prison sentence if convicted.

Bratsenis

from Page 1

returned to New Jersey, where they stabbed Galdleri to death in his Jersey City apartment and lit it on fire.

He said Caddle paid him the day after the murder at a diner in Elizabeth, N.J., and he later split the fee with Africa.

Caddle and Africa pleaded guilty to the murder for hire conspiracy, Caddle last year and Africa earlier this year.

"This defendant conspired in the ultimate crime — murder for money," FBI Newark Special Agent in Charge George M. Crouch Jr. said in a release. "Those who devalue life — whether out of greed or animus — need to know that the FBI is dedicated to keeping our citizens safe, and nothing will stop us from accomplishing that mission. When you break the law, you will be brought to justice no matter how long it takes."

Bratsenis, who has spent most of his life in prison on convictions for crimes that include bank robbery and murder, was told Thursday he could spend the rest of it there because he faces a sentence of mandatory life when he returns to court for sentencing on Aug. 2.

Bratsenis built a notorious criminal resume in the 1970s and '80s, after graduating from Stamford High School in 1966 and fighting as a tunnel rat in Vietnam while serving in the U.S. Marine Corp. from 1968 to 1972.

After the military, Bratsenis began doing strong arm work for the Gambino crime family, which was a criminal force in the southwest corner of the state and had penetrated the Stamford Police Department, according to federal prosecutors and others.

In 1984, he was charged in a conspiracy with then-Stamford police Lt. Lawrence Hogan to murder drug dealer David "the Turk" Avnayim.

Bratsenis often partnered with Louis "Trigger Lou" Sclafani, another mob-connected hoodlum — until Sclafani joined the federal witness protection program and turned on him, the prosecutors and other lawyers said. Sclafani was relocated, made millions of dollars in the trash industry and was named "man of the year" in the new city where he was settled, according to two lawyers who remained in contact with him.

Sclafani was a key government witness against Bratsenis at a 1980s trial when Bratsenis was charged with a variety of felonies, including bank robbery and the conspiracy to kill "the Turk." Under cross examination, Sclafani conceded he would not hesitate to lie under oath if he could save himself. Bratsenis was convicted anyway and sentenced to decades in prison.

After serving his Connecticut sentence, Bretsenis was transferred to a New Jersey prison to serve time there for crimes committed there. Genesis of the murder-for-hire could lie in the New Jersey prison.

He was confined for more than three years with Caddle's brother, James Caddle, at the Northern State Prison in Newark, according to state corrections department records. James Caddle was in prison on kidnapping, burglary and robbery convictions.

Bratsenis and Africa also met in the New Jersey prison system, according to the Connecticut records. Africa, 61, formerly known as Baxter Randolf Keys, is from Philadelphia.

"Bratsenis was incarcerated for a bank robbery conviction and Africa was incarcerated for a robbery conviction," a 2016 prosecution memo filed by the U.S. Attorney's office in New Haven says. "From 1999 through 2006, Bratsenis and Africa were both assigned to Block 2C, eight cells apart in cells 32 and 40."

It was while they were together in prison that Bratsenis and Africa agreed to "rob banks together" when they got out, according to the memo.

Bratsenis and Africa pulled two bank jobs in Fairfield County in 2014, after they were released. Galdieri's murder took place between the two.

Bratsenis was arrested after the second bank robbery when local police learned that a white pick-up truck spotted by a bank robbery suspect was owned by his sister. When questioned, she acknowledged owning the truck, but said it was being driven by her brother George, who had recently been released from prison after serving 27 years for bank robberies.

The police spotted Bratsenis driving the truck, pulled him over and searched it. Among other things, they found a mask used in one of the bank robberies, a half dozen hundred dollar bills, and a long-blade butcher's knife.



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Legal experts make case for Jackson

Hearings conclude on confirmation of high court nominee

By Mary Clare Jalonick and Kevin Freking
Associated Press



D. Jean Veta, left, Ann Claire Williams and Joseph Drayton of the ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary prepare to testify Thursday on Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's nomination to the Supreme Court. **HILARY SWIFT/THE NEW YORK TIMES**

WASHINGTON — Legal experts praised Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson in her final day of Senate hearings on Thursday, with a top lawyers' group saying its review found she has a "sterling" reputation, "exceptional" competence and is well qualified to sit on the Supreme Court.

The testimony from the American Bar Association and other experts came after two days of questioning from members of the Senate Judiciary Committee and wrapped up about 30 hours of hearings on Jackson's nomination. In the days of questioning, Republicans asked Jackson about her record as a federal judge, including her sentencing of criminal defendants, as she seeks to become the first Black woman on the nation's highest court.

"Outstanding, excellent, superior, superb," testified Ann Claire Williams, chair of the American Bar Association committee that makes recommendations on federal judges. "Those are the comments from virtually everyone we interviewed."

Williams said the group spoke to more than 250 judges and lawyers about Jackson. "The question we kept asking ourselves: How does one human being do so much so extraordinary well?"

Democrats are hoping to win bipartisan votes, but Republicans have portrayed Jackson as soft on crime in her nine years on the federal bench. Jackson, supported by committee Democrats, pushed back on that GOP narrative in more than 22 hours of questioning, explaining the sentencing process in detail and telling them: "nothing could be further from the truth."

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell announced Thursday that he will vote against confirming Jackson, saying he "cannot and will not" support her appointment to the Supreme Court.

McConnell slammed the liberal groups that have supported Jackson, and he criticized her for refusing to take a position on the size of the nine-member court, even though that decision is ultimately up to Congress. Some advocacy have pushed for enlarging the court after three of President Donald Trump's nominees cemented a conservative majority.

"Judge Jackson was the court packers' pick and she testified like it," McConnell, R-Ky., said in a floor speech.

The final, four-hour hearing Thursday featured not only legal experts but government officials and civil rights groups who supported Jackson and conservative advocates who opposed her.

Alabama Attorney General Steven Marshall, a witness invited by the minority, echoed the Republicans' concerns. Marshall said Jackson's supporters cite her as a voice for the vulnerable, but "we should be interested in exploring whether her zeal is equally fervent for another class of our most vulnerable — victims of violent crime."

Illinois Democrat Dick Durbin, the committee chairman, noted that some Republican senators argued that Jackson was out of the mainstream when it comes to sentencing. Durbin asked the ABA chair whether such a concern would have surfaced in their interviews with the judges and lawyers who worked with her.

"It never came up in any of these interviews," Williams said.

Democrats tried to portray Marshall as out of the mainstream, asking about his efforts to overturn Biden's 2020 presidential victory.

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., asked Marshall whether Biden was the "duly elected" president. Marshall, who had supported a lawsuit to overturn former President Donald Trump's defeat — would only say that Biden was president. The Supreme Court dismissed that suit.

The Senate committee is expected to vote on Jackson's nomination by April 4. Democrats are hoping to hold a final confirmation vote by Easter in mid-April, when the Senate takes a two-week break.

The GOP criticism was met by effusive praise from Democrats, and by reflections on the historic nature of her nomination. The most riveting came from New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, who used his time not to ask questions but to tearfully speak and draw tears from Jackson as well.

Booker, who is Black, said that he sees "my ancestors and yours" when he looks at her. "I know what it's taken for you to sit here in this seat," he said. "You have earned this spot."

Jackson, whose family was seated behind her, was silent as Booker talked, but tears rolled down her face.

Jackson was in tears a second time after similar praise from Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Calif., and she responded that she hopes to be an inspiration because "I love this country, because I love the law."

Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., told Jackson she seemed like "a very kind person" — but "there's at least a level of empathy that enters into your treatment of a defendant that some could view as maybe beyond what some of us would be comfortable with, with respect to administering justice."

Durbin began Thursday's hearing by thanking most Republicans on the committee, but he also said "some of the attacks on the judge were unfair, unrelenting and beneath the dignity of the United States Senate."

US announces sweeping change to asylum process

Goal is to ease the existing backlog in immigration courts

By Eileen Sullivan
The New York Times



People seen Tuesday walk to the San Ysidro Port of Entry on their way to cross the southern border from Tijuana, Mexico, into the United States. **MARIO TAMA/GETTY**

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration has finalized a plan to overhaul the system for immigrants seeking asylum in the United States, aiming to take a burden off the backlogged immigration courts in what some experts see as the most sweeping change to the process in a quarter-century.

Under the new policy, which the administration released Thursday as an interim final rule, some migrants seeking asylum will have their claims heard and evaluated by asylum officers instead of immigration judges.

The goal, administration officials said, is for the entire process to take six months, compared with a current average of about five years. The plan is to release many asylum-seekers through a parole status while they go through the process, which critics say will draw even more hopeful migrants to the border. In recent weeks, border officials have been apprehending more than 13,000 migrants a day, according to data shared with The New York Times.

President Joe Biden pledged to "restore humanity" to the asylum system after four years of restrictive measures put in place by former President Donald Trump. But the need to fix the overburdened system, where more than 670,000 cases were pending in immigration court at the end of February, long predates the last administration.

The new rule comes as border officials try to manage a record number of migrants crossing the southwestern border. Thousands of migrants in the country illegally are already being released, many with plans to apply for asylum.

"It very well could be one of the most significant reforms to the asylum system in a long time, going beyond undoing the Trump administration's attempts to limit access to asylum, and actually institute meaningful structural reforms," said Austin Kocher, a geographer at Syracuse University who analyzes immigration enforcement data.

The final rule did not change substantially from the version proposed in August, which drew more than 5,000 public comments.

Officials from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Office and Executive Office for Immigration Review, where asylum cases are handled, spoke to reporters on condition of anonymity Wednesday and said the process would be rolled out slowly. They did not say where it would begin or how many migrants would be involved.

For the plan to be fully operational, the government needs to hire hundreds of new asylum officers to handle about 75,000 asylum-seekers a year.

"Through this rule, we are building a more functional and sensible asylum system to ensure that individuals who are eligible will receive protection more swiftly, while those who are not eligible will be rapidly removed," Alejandro Mayorkas, the homeland security secretary, said in a statement.

Adding fewer cases to the immigration court system will help by contributing less to the backlog. Asylum cases make up about 40% of the 1.7 million case backlog.

Many immigration advocates raised concerns about rushing migrants through the process and denying them due process.

"Rushing asylum-seekers through adjudications without sufficient time to secure legal representation, gather evidence or prepare their cases is inefficient and counterproductive," said Eleanor Acer, senior director for refugee protection at Human Rights First.

There are also concerns that the plan will involve what many advocates say is a flawed and unfair process known as expedited removal. That was established in a 1996 law that gave immigration officials the authority to deport people without a hearing or a lawyer if they did not express a fear of returning to their country.

In the expedited removal process, border officials ask migrants if they are afraid to return to their own countries. Migrants who say they have a fear of returning are scheduled for a "credible fear" interview with an asylum officer.

Until now, migrants who passed those interviews joined many others waiting in the U.S. for years to appear before an immigration judge. But under the new plan, migrants who pass the initial screening will then make their case to an asylum officer, a process considered less confrontational.

According to a government analysis, the number of migrants in expedited removal proceedings who claimed they were afraid to return to their country has increased over the years. In 2006, for example, 5% asked for credible fear interviews; in 2018, 42% did.

The new rule will go into effect 60 days after it is published in the Federal Register.



People watch a file image of a North Korean missile launch on Thursday in South Korea. **CHUNG SUNG-JUN/GETTY**

NKorea tests long-range missile to raise pressure

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea test-fired possibly its biggest intercontinental ballistic missile Thursday, according to its neighbors, raising the ante in a pressure campaign aimed at forcing the United States and other rivals to accept it as a nuclear power and remove crippling sanctions.

Kim Dong-yub, a professor at Seoul's University of North Korean Studies, said flight details suggest the missile could reach targets 9,320 miles away when fired on normal trajectory with a warhead weighing less than a ton. That would place the entire U.S. mainland within striking distance.

The launch, which extended North Korea's barrage of weapons tests this year, came after the U.S. and South Korean militaries said the country was preparing a flight of a new large ICBM unveiled in October 2020.

South Korea's military responded with live-fire drills of its own missiles launched from land, a fighter jet and a ship, underscoring a revival of tensions as nuclear negotiations remain frozen. It said it confirmed readiness to execute precision strikes against North Korea's missile launch points as well as command and support facilities.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told reporters the U.S. requested an open Security Council meeting on the launch.

South Korea said the North's ICBM fired from the Sunan area near the capital Pyongyang traveled 670 miles and reached a maximum altitude of more than 3,850 miles. The missile was apparently fired on high angle to avoid reaching the territorial waters of Japan.

The missile flew 71 minutes before possibly landing near Japanese territorial waters off the island of Hokkaido, said Tokyo's Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno.

WORLD & NATION

In Russia, a turn toward defiance

People countering new crackdowns by speaking up and out

Associated Press



Graffiti that translates to 'Yes to Peace!' on a wall of an apartment building in St. Petersburg, Russia, gets painted over by a laborer on March 18. **AP**

NEW YORK — When Alexei Navalny was arrested in January 2021, tens of thousands of Russians filled the streets in protest, demanding that the top Kremlin critic be released and chanting slogans against President Vladimir Putin. Thousands were arrested.

Since then, Putin has unleashed the harshest crackdown since the era of the Soviet Union: Navalny was imprisoned and his organization outlawed. His associates and other activists were either prosecuted, fled the country or had their hands tied by draconian new laws. Independent news outlets were blocked and social media platforms banned.

And now, Russia has sent its military into Ukraine, the largest invasion in Europe since World War II.

But while the Kremlin has worked hard to crush political dissent and opposition to the war, flickers of defiance have emerged.

Antiwar marches of protesters chanting "No to war!" occurred in Moscow, St. Petersburg and elsewhere after the Feb. 24 invasion, with more than 15,000 people detained, according to the OVD-Info rights group that tracks political arrests.

A silent demonstrator in the city of Nizhny Novgorod displayed a blank sign and was promptly detained by police.

A live evening news broadcast on Russia's state TV was interrupted March 14 by a woman who walked behind the anchor and held up a handmade poster protesting the war in English and Russian. OVD-Info identified her as Marina Ovsyannikova, an employee of the station, who was taken into custody and fined.

Navalny remained unbowed at a trial held in the penal colony where he is serving a 2 ½-year sentence.

On Tuesday, he was convicted on fraud and contempt of court charges and given nine additional years — a move seen as an attempt to keep Putin's biggest foe behind bars for as long as possible.

The 45-year-old corruption fighter, who in 2020 survived a poisoning with a nerve agent that he blames on the Kremlin, said on Facebook in a sardonic comment that was posted by his team: "My space flight is taking a bit longer than expected."

Navalny ally Ilya Yashin, who has vowed to remain in Russia, also spoke out against the increased jail time.

"Of course, nine years is a stiff sentence," Yashin said on Facebook. "Rapists, thieves and murderers in Russia often get less. ... But in reality (the sentence) doesn't mean anything, because everyone understands: Alexei will spend as much time behind bars as Putin will sit in the Kremlin."

Navalny's trial, which began a week before Russian troops rolled into Ukraine, prompted a small act of defiance by one of the witnesses for the prosecution. Fyodor Gorozhanko, a former activist in Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation, who has since left Russia, testified that he had been coerced to give evidence against the opposition leader.

Navalny's foundation and a nationwide network of regional offices were outlawed last year as extremist and ceased operating. The Kremlin also turned up the heat on other opposition activists and groups, as well as on independent media and human rights organizations.

Dozens have been slapped with a crippling "foreign agent" label, which implies additional government scrutiny and scorn. Many have been forced to shut down under pressure.

With the invasion of Ukraine, the crackdown has been expanded — all but silencing most independent news sites. Facebook and Instagram were banned as extremist and were blocked in Russia. Twitter also was blocked, although Russians who use virtual private networks, or VPNs, are able to avoid access restrictions to the social media networks and news outlets banned in Russia.

A new law was rubberstamped by the parliament, criminalizing content that deviates from the official line as "fake news" or which discredits the Russian military and its actions in Ukraine. Media outlets have faced pressure over calling the action a "war" or an "invasion," rather than using the government's description of it as a "special military operation."

The first criminal cases under the new law appeared shortly after it was adopted and, among others, implicated two prominent public figures who condemned the offensive on social media.

Navalny's team has been undeterred by both the war and the trial of its leader, announcing it was rebooting the foundation as an international organization.

"Corruption kills," read its new website. "As Ukrainian cities are bombed by Putin, this has never been more obvious. Putin and his circle have done everything to stay in power — and steal, and steal, and steal some more. High on their own impunity, they unleashed a war."

Mikhail Khodorkovsky, an exiled Russian oil tycoon who spent a decade in prison in Russia on charges widely seen as revenge for challenging Putin's rule, spoke Tuesday of his optimism for Navalny.

"Nine years were handed to Navalny. However, what does it matter? What matters is how much time Putin has left. And here I think there is some good news for Alexei," Khodorkovsky posted in a tweet.

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

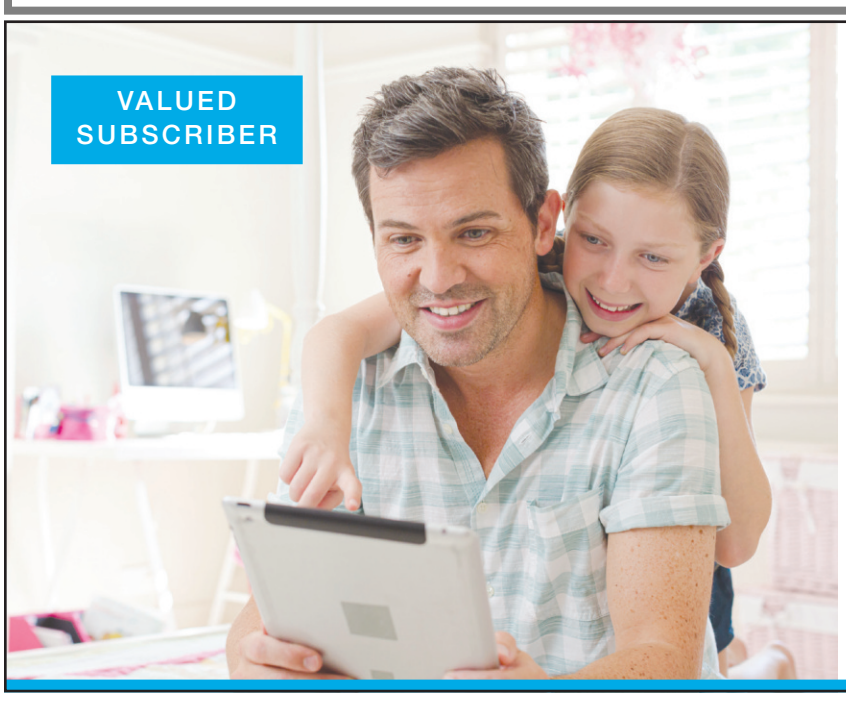
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WORLD & NATION

Greitens accusations worry GOP

New claims against disgraced leader now seeking Senate seat

By Steve Peoples, Brian Slodysko and John Hanna
Associated Press



Ex-Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens is seeking Roy Blunt's seat in the U.S. Senate. **NATHAN PAPES/SPRINGFIELD NEWS-LEADER 2021**

WASHINGTON — Accusations that Eric Greitens, a leading Republican contender for the U.S. Senate in Missouri, physically assaulted members of his family added fresh urgency to ensure the GOP doesn't nominate candidates who are so damaged that they risk otherwise safe seats.

Greitens has so far ignored calls to end his campaign from virtually every notable Missouri Republican, including his rivals in the August primary and Sen. Roy Blunt, whose retirement left the seat open. But it had reverberations beyond Missouri, serving as a reminder that Greitens is at least the third statewide Republican this cycle to face accusations of domestic violence.

In other states with competitive Senate races, including Arizona, Georgia, Ohio and Pennsylvania, leading GOP candidates are aggressively courting former President Donald Trump even after he inspired the violent Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Others are embracing controversial policy positions on issues like abortion and health care.

For now, Republicans are well positioned to retake the Senate majority, aiming to capitalize on President Joe Biden's unpopularity and concerns about inflation amid rising gas prices. But as the 2022 primary season intensifies, those advantages could be threatened if the GOP's most loyal voters rally around candidates who may be popular among the base but toxic in a general election campaign, where moderates are often much more decisive.

That concern was clear as Republicans abandoned Greitens, who was forced from the governor's office in 2018 amid a sex scandal.

"He is even more unfit for public office now than in 2018 when I denounced his behavior and called for him to resign as governor," said Missouri Republican donor David Humphreys, whose family gave $2.2 million to Greitens' campaign in 2016.

In a sworn affidavit made public Monday, Greitens' ex-wife, Sheena Greitens, detailed an encounter in which he "knocked me down." She also described "physical violence toward our children, such as cuffing our then-3-year-old son across the face at the dinner table in front of me and yanking him around by his hair."

Greitens forcefully denied the accusations as "completely fabricated" and "baseless."

"I am seeking full custody of my sons, and for their sake, I will continue to pray for their mother and hope that she gets the help that she needs," he said in a statement issued from his Twitter account.

In a social media post Tuesday, Sheena Greitens insisted her allegations in the affidavit were true.

"My only interest is what's best for my two children, and for the last four years, I have gone to great lengths to keep these family matters private to protect them," she wrote in a statement. "I am not interested in litigating this matter anywhere other than the courtroom."

Given this week's developments, strategists in both parties suggest that a Greitens win in the state's Aug. 2 primary would give Democrats a legitimate opportunity to flip a Senate seat in deep-red Missouri, where Trump won by more than 15 percentage points in 2020. Even if Democrats do not prevail, a Greitens candidacy would likely force Republicans to devote energy and resources to the contest.

"It is a very safe Republican seat unless Eric Greitens wins the primary, and then it's in play," said Doug Heye, a Washington-based Republican strategist. "It's still Missouri, but Democrats are going to have a chance."

With the Senate currently evenly divided, Republicans need to gain just one seat to regain the majority. But the Greitens allegations surfaced as the party is already sorting through challenges elsewhere.

Trump-backed Republican candidate Sean Parnell was forced to suspend his Pennsylvania Senate campaign after losing custody of his children following allegations of physical abuse.

In Georgia, leading Republican Senate candidate Herschel Walker has faced scrutiny of his turbulent personal history, which includes his acknowledged struggles with mental health, violent outbursts and accusations that he repeatedly threatened his ex-wife.

More broadly, GOP primary races in other states are tipping into decidedly nasty territory. A Republican primary debate in Ohio last week devolved into a near-physical altercation between two candidates. Trump, meanwhile, will be in Georgia this weekend to rally his supporters against the state's incumbent Republican governor as retribution for his refusal to cooperate with the then-president's effort to overturn the 2020 election.

For his part, Greitens is focusing on Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., whom he blamed for orchestrating the latest scandal as part of a sustained effort to undermine his candidacy.

"You're going to be able to connect the dots directly to Mitch McConnell. You're going to be able to connect the dots directly to the ... swamp who always does this," Greitens said on former Trump adviser Steve Bannon's podcast this week. "When I'm elected to the U.S. Senate we're taking on Mitch McConnell."

McConnell has often pointed to the GOP's loss in a 2014 Missouri Senate race as an example of what can happen when the party nominates a candidate who can't win a general election. He tried to sidestep the issue Tuesday on Capitol Hill when pressed by reporters.

"I think all of the developments of the last 24 hours are things the people of Missouri are going to take into account both in the primary, and I would assume they would take into account in the general," he said.

Even before this week's developments, Greitens was viewed as a vulnerable candidate in November's general election in no small part because of the circumstances of his resignation as governor. He left office amid an investigation of an extramarital affair with his St. Louis hairdresser allegedly involving bondage and blackmail.

An allegation of a photo taken without the woman's consent for the purposes of blackmail led to a felony criminal charge, which was eventually dropped.

Still, Greitens was considered one of the strongest candidates in the August primary election given his name recognition, the implicit backing of some Trump allies and the crowded field of Republican candidates expected to split the vote.

Few expect him to leave the race immediately, although it's uncertain whether he can continue to raise campaign cash to sustain his bid. At the end of 2021, when he last filed a fundraising report, Greitens had only $290,000 cash on hand and was $154,000 in debt, records show.

Reports: Justice's wife urged overturning 2020 election

Associated Press



Virginia Thomas seen with Justice Clarence Thomas. **DREW ANGERER/GETTY 2021**

WASHINGTON — Virginia Thomas, wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, sent weeks of text messages urging White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows to act to overturn the 2020 presidential election — furthering then-President Donald Trump's lies that the free and fair vote was marred by nonexistent fraud, according to copies of the messages obtained by The Washington Post and CBS News.

The 29 messages the pair exchanged came in the weeks after the vote in November 2020, when Trump and his top allies were still saying they planned to go to the Supreme Court to have its results voided.

The Post reported that on Nov. 10, three days after the election and after Associated Press and other news outlets declared Democrat Joe Biden the winner, Virginia Thomas, a conservative activist, texted to Meadows: "Help This Great President stand firm, Mark!!! ... You are the leader, with him, who is standing for America's constitutional governance at the precipice. The majority knows Biden and the Left is attempting the greatest Heist of our History."

Copies of the texts — 21 sent by her, eight sent in reply by Meadows — were provided to the House select committee investigating the deadly insurrection that saw a mob of mostly Trump supporters overrun the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

The AP attempted to get the same information from the committee, but it declined to comment.

The texts do not directly reference Thomas' husband — Justice Clarence Thomas — or the Supreme Court. But she has previously admitted to attending the Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally that preceded the Capitol riot.

Virginia Thomas also has previously denied conflicts of interest between her activism and her husband's place on the high court.

Still, the messages show she was urging the top levels of the Trump administration to try to throw out the 2020 election results, and even offering coaching to Meadows on how best to do so. Thomas urged lawyer Sidney Powell, who promoted false claims about the election, to be "the lead and the face" of the Trump legal team.

Meadows' attorney, George Terwilliger III, told the Post and CBS that neither he nor Meadows would comment on individual texts.

Terwilliger added "nothing about the text messages presents any legal issues."

Justice Thomas, 73, has been hospitalized for treatment from an infection.

He and his wife did not respond to the outlets' request for comment.

In February 2021, the Supreme Court rejected challenges to the election. Justice Thomas dissented, calling the ruling not to hear arguments in the case "befuddling" and "inexplicable."

In a Nov. 5 message to Meadows, Virginia Thomas quoted material that had appeared on right-wing fringe websites: "Biden crime family & ballot fraud co-conspirators (elected officials, bureaucrats, social media censorship mongers, fake stream media reporters, etc) are being arrested & detained for ballot fraud right now & over coming days, & will be living in barges off GITMO to face military tribunals for sedition."

In a subsequent text the next day, Thomas wrote to Meadows, "Do not concede."

The messages also suggest that Meadows was willing to continue pursuing ways to overturn the election. He replied to one message from Thomas: "I will stand firm. We will fight until there is no fight left. Our country is too precious to give up on. Thanks for all you do."

The texts between Thomas and Meadows stop after November 24, 2020. But the committee received another message sent on Jan. 10, 2021, four days after the mob attack on the Capitol, according to the Post and CBS.

"We are living through what feels like the end of America," Thomas wrote to Meadows in it.

WAR IN UKRAINE

UN agency says over 4M kids flee from homes in Ukraine

By Cara Anna
Associated Press



Natalia Moiseinko holds her 10-year-old daughter Zlata on Thursday at a schoolhouse that has been converted to a field hospital in Mostyska, Ukraine. **NARIMAN EL-MOFTY/AP**

MOSTYSKA, Ukraine — Russia's invasion has displaced half of Ukraine's children. On a hospital bed in a town close to the border with Poland, a little girl with a long blonde braid and dressed in pink is one of them.

To get there, Zlata Moiseinko survived a chronic heart condition, daily bombings, days of sheltering in a damp and chilly basement and nights of sleeping in a freezing car. The fragile 10-year-old became so unsettled that her father risked his life to return to their ninth-floor apartment 60 miles south of the capital, Kyiv, to rescue her pet hamster, Lola, to comfort her.

The animal now rests in a small cage beside Zlata's bed in a schoolhouse that has been converted into a field hospital operated by Israeli medical workers. The girl and her family hope to join friends in Germany.

"I want peace for all Ukraine," the little girl said.

The United Nations children's agency says half of the country's children, or 4.3 million of an estimated 7.5 million, have now fled their homes, including about 1.8 million refugees who have left the country.

Zlata's mother, Natalia, folded her hands in prayer and was close to tears. Thursday marked a month of war and already she can hardly take any more.

"I ask for help for our children and the elderly," the mother said.

She recalled the escape from their community of Bila Tserkva that put her daughter's life in peril beyond the threat of airstrikes.

As Russian planes pounded overhead, aiming for the local military base, the family decided to run. They found shelter for a week in a cold, damp basement.

"We gave her medication to calm her down," her mother said. But it was not enough. Every loud sound was jarring. The family had few options, without friends and family to call on for help along the road west toward Poland and safety. Eventually they tried to shelter with an acquaintance of the girl's grandmother, Nadia, but the sounds of airplanes and air raid sirens followed them.

On the final drive to the border, Zlata and her family slept in their car in freezing weather. At the border, amid confusion over documents and the girl's father, they were turned away. Ukraine is not allowing men ages 18 to 60 to leave the country in case they're called to fight, with few exceptions.

It was by chance that the family heard about the Israeli field hospital in the Ukrainian border town of Mostyska. Now they are regrouping in relative comfort and without the scream of sirens.

At times, to fill the silence, Zlata plays the piano at the school. She missed playing while the family was on the run, her mother said. She proudly showed off her daughter's YouTube channel of performances. The most recent video, however, showed their basement hideout instead. As the shaking camera panned to show a bare light bulb and concrete walls, the mother narrated in a whisper.

"All we have is potatoes and a few blankets," she said in the recording.

For now, until the family moves again, there is some peace. A drawing by Zlata has been tacked up in the hallway. On a nearby bed, a stuffed panda and a doll embrace.

The girl has been transformed. She arrived at the field hospital severely dehydrated, said one of the Israeli physicians, Dr. Michael Segal, who was born in Kyiv and who has been moved by the stories he hears from back home.

"It's very close to my heart," Segal said of Ukraine. People have lost everything "in one brief moment."

Zlata's family "came here crying, not knowing what to do," he added.

The medical staff stepped in and even treated her hamster, doctors said.

And reminded of that, the girl's exhausted mother smiled.

"That hamster's the superstar of the clinic," she said. "It had been overstressed, too."

WORLD & NATION

NEWS BRIEFING

Former NY prosecutor believes Trump guilty of 'numerous' felonies

From news services

NEW YORK — A prosecutor who had been leading a criminal investigation into Donald Trump before quitting last month said in his resignation letter that he believes the former president is "guilty of numerous felony violations" and he disagreed with the Manhattan district attorney's decision not to seek an indictment.

In the letter, published Wednesday by The New York Times, Mark Pomerantz told District Attorney Alvin Bragg there was "evidence sufficient to establish Mr. Trump's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt" of allegations he falsified financial statements to secure loans and burnish his image as a wealthy businessman.

"The team that has been investigating Mr. Trump harbors no doubt about whether he committed crimes — he did," Pomerantz wrote.

Pomerantz and his former co-leader on the Trump probe, Carey Dunne, resigned Feb. 23 after clashing with Bragg over the future of the case.

Both were top deputies tasked with running the investigation on a day-to-day basis. Both started on the probe under former District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr., and Bragg asked them to stay when he took office in January.

Vance and Bragg are Democrats.

In his resignation letter, Pomerantz wrote that Vance had directed his deputies to present evidence to a grand jury and seek an indictment of Trump and other defendants "as soon as reasonably possible." No former president has ever been charged with a crime.

"I believe that your decision not to prosecute Donald Trump now, and on the existing record, is misguided and completely contrary to the public interest," Pomerantz wrote.

Danielle Filson, a spokesperson for Bragg, said in a statement Wednesday night that the investigation into Trump is continuing and that a "team of experienced prosecutors is working every day to follow the facts and the law. There is nothing we can or should say at this juncture about an ongoing investigation."

A message seeking comment was left with Trump's lawyer.



Security guards protect ex-South Korean President Park Geun-hye, center right, after an object was thrown at her Thursday at her home in Daegu, South Korea. Park, who was ousted and sentenced in 2017 in a high-profile corruption scandal, received a pardon Dec. 31. Her return home came after being treated at a hospital in Seoul since November. **DONG-A ILBO/GETTY-AFP**

Supreme Court ruling: The Supreme Court on Thursday sided with a Texas death row inmate seeking to have his pastor be allowed to pray out loud and touch him during his execution.

The high court's decision won't keep John Henry Ramirez from being executed. But the justices in an 8-1 decision rejected Texas' defense of its policy of allowing an inmate's spiritual adviser to be present in the death chamber but without speaking or touching the inmate.

Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in a majority opinion that Texas "appears to have long allowed prison chaplains to pray with inmates in the execution chamber, deciding to prohibit such prayer only in the last several years."

He also rejected concerns that allowing Ramirez to be touched could interfere with the IV lines that carry the drugs used to carry out the execution.

Justice Clarence Thomas was the lone justice to dissent, writing that Ramirez has engaged in repeated litigation tactics to delay his execution and that his current lawsuit "is but the latest iteration in an 18-year pattern of evasion."

Ramirez is on death row for killing a Corpus Christi convenience store worker during a 2004 robbery.

Fitness council flap: The White House removed Dr. Mehmet Oz — best known as daytime TV's host of "The Dr. Oz Show" — and former football star Herschel Walker from the President's Council on Sports, Nutrition and Fitness as both men run for U.S. Senate.

Oz and Walker — both Republicans — were appointed by former President Donald Trump.

An official said Oz and Walker were asked to resign because the White House doesn't permit candidates for federal office to serve on boards.

The letter from the White House Office of Presidential Personnel asked the men to resign Wednesday or be removed by the end of the day. Walker announced his candidacy in Georgia on Aug. 25 and Oz announced his candidacy in Pennsylvania on Nov. 30.

Oz said he had no intention of resigning.

Walker also took to Twitter on Thursday to attribute his removal to politics.

Swiss falling deaths: Swiss police say three adults and a child have died and a teenager was seriously injured after falling from a seven-story residential building Thursday in the lakeside town of Montreux.

Police said the victims were French citizens and members of the same family. Officers had tried to execute a warrant in connection with the homeschooling of a child shortly before the incident, police said.

In a statement, police identified the people killed as a 40-year-old man, his 41-year-old wife, her twin sister and the couple's 8-year-old daughter. They said the couple's 15-year-old son was seriously injured.

Authorities have opened an investigation "to determine the exact circumstances and reasons for this tragedy," police said.

Chinese official meets Taliban: China's foreign minister made a surprise visit Thursday in Afghanistan's capital, meeting with the country's new Taliban rulers.

According to the official Bakhtar News Agency, Wang Yi was to meet with Taliban leaders "to discuss various issues, including the extension of political relations, economic, and transit cooperation."

The Taliban, who seized power last August during the chaotic final weeks of the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces after 20 years of war, have been seeking international recognition in order to open up Afghanistan's economy, which has been in free fall since their takeover.

Wang's visit came as Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy to Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, was also in Kabul.

Kabulov also met with the Taliban-appointed foreign minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, Taliban spokesman Qahar Balkhi said.

GIF inventor dies: Stephen Wilhite, the inventor of the internet-popular short-video format, the GIF, has died at 74.

His wife, Kathaleen, said Thursday that he died of COVID on March 14.

Wilhite, who lived in Milford, Ohio, won a Webby lifetime achievement award in 2013 for inventing the GIF, which decades after its creation became omnipresent in memes and on social media.

Wilhite was working at CompuServe in 1987 when he invented the GIF.

"I saw the format I wanted in my head and then I started programming," he told The New York Times in 2013, saying the first image was an airplane.

He also insisted that the file had only one pronunciation — with a soft "G," like Jif peanut butter.

Those using the hard "G," as in "got" or "given," "are wrong," he said. "End of story."

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BUSINESS

US, allies move to freeze Russia's reserves of gold

By Fatima Hussein
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. and its allies said Thursday they're moving to block financial transactions with Russia's Central Bank that involve gold, aiming to further restrict the country's ability to use its international reserves because of Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Putin has been building his gold stockpile since 2014.

Here's how these sanctions would work:

Q: How much gold does Russia have?
A: Russian gold purchases increased in 2014, after the U.S. issued sanctions on Russia for Putin's invasion of Crimea. Now the country holds $100 billion to $140 billion in gold reserves, which is roughly 20% of the holdings in the Russian Central Bank, according to U.S. officials.

Additionally, the Bank of Russia announced Feb. 28, shortly after several Russian banks were removed from the SWIFT bank messaging system, that it would resume the purchase of gold on the domestic precious metals market.

Q: How could Russia use gold to evade sanctions?
A: The U.S. says that Russia can and has used gold to support its currency as a way to circumvent the impact of sanctions.

One way to do that is by swapping the gold for a more liquid foreign exchange that is not subject to current sanctions.

Another way would be to sell the bullion through gold markets and dealers. The gold could also be used to directly purchase goods and services from willing sellers.

Q: How would the sanctions apply?
A: The U.S. announcement to block gold transactions was done alongside Group of Seven and European Union allies that will also impose the gold reserve ban.

New guidance from the U.S. Treasury Department states that American individuals, including gold dealers, distributors, wholesalers, buyers, and financial institutions are generally banned from buying, selling or facilitating gold-related transactions involving Russia and the various parties that have been sanctioned.

Q: What kind of impact could this have on Russia?
A: The move should further impact the country's ability to launder money and will in effect apply secondary sanctions on people who trade in gold with Russia, experts say.

"It is another way to close sanctions loopholes, and increase economic pressure on Russian entities," said Rachel Ziemba, an adjunct senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security.

The ban on gold transactions is also an attempt to prevent innovative financial transactions through other countries that continue to do business with Russia.

Q: What other sanctions have been imposed?
A: The U.S. also took additional sanctions actions on Thursday. It sanctioned dozens of Russian defense companies, 328 members of the Russian State Duma — or state assembly — and the head of Russia's largest financial institution.

Those actions are on top of export controls and financial penalties issued in the past month on Putin, his inner circle, some of the country's top financial institutions, along with several banking institutions' removal from the SWIFT bank messaging system.



A convoy of concrete trucks take part in a slow-driving protest of high fuel prices on Tuesday near Madrid, Spain. **MANU FERNANDEZ/AP**

Energy crisis at boiling point

Despite protests and amid conflict, Europe is limited in reigning in higher prices

By Kelvin Chan and Aritz Parra
Associated Press

MADRID — Across Europe, governments are slashing fuel taxes and doling out tens of billions to help consumers, truckers, farmers and others cope with spiking energy prices made worse by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

But it's not enough for some whose livelihoods hinge on fuel.

Miguel Angel Rodriguez was one of 200 concrete truck drivers who held a slow-driving protest around Madrid this week. He said filling up used to cost 1,600 euros, or about $1,760 a month, but he's been forking out an extra 500 euros since the start of the year.

"We will continue striking because, at the end of the day, it's pretty much the same for us to go out to work or to stay at home," Rodriguez said. He warned that his rising costs were part of "a domino effect that is only going to drive us all to our ruin unless the government takes some definitive action."

He's among those in industries like trucking or fishing who are staging protests to push politicians to ease their financial pain. The war has exacerbated a monthslong energy crunch in Europe, which is dependent on Russian oil and natural gas. Governments have limited options to provide lasting relief as households and businesses face crippling energy bills, high pump prices and other effects. Volatile energy markets control natural gas and oil prices that have fueled record inflation.

Countries like Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden are doing what they can, passing temporary efforts to provide immediate help: slashing fuel taxes, rolling out heating and power subsidies or rebates, and capping energy bills for households and small businesses.

Such measures "are sensible, and some of them, such as energy tax cuts, could be sustained indefinitely — even if prices continue to increase," said Elisabetta Cornago, a senior research fellow at the Centre for European Reform think tank who specializes in EU energy policy.

But she called them partial solutions that "only make a small difference."

"The main problem is that these measures to keep energy prices low will also suppress incentives for energy efficiency, for investment in green energy generation, and for electrifying sectors that currently rely on fossil fuels — so they could make the long-term pain of adjustment harder," Cornago said.

Raising interest rates, the tool wielded by central banks to tame inflation, also would do little to rein in energy prices — which European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde noted last month. That's because "rising energy prices are due to fundamental shifts in energy markets," Cornago said.

Gasoline across the EU's 27 countries has risen 40% from a year ago, to an average of 2.02 euros per liter — the equivalent of $8.40 a gallon.

To bring down prices long-term, there are two options, Cornago said: investment in renewables and measures like better insulation for homes or electrifying industries that rely on natural gas.

In the near future, an EU proposal for a common strategic gas reserve could work to improve security of supply by next winter.

"But realistically, refilling reserves at a time of tight gas markets is also going to result in higher prices for consumers generally," Cornago said.

Russian stock market offers limited trading

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Russian stock market opened Thursday for limited trading under heavy restrictions for the first time since Moscow invaded Ukraine, coming a month after prices plunged and the market was shut down as a way to insulate the economy.

Trading of a limited number of stocks, including energy giants Gazprom and Rosneft, took place under curbs meant to prevent a repeat of the massive selloff on Feb. 24 that came in anticipation of Western economic sanctions.

The significant restrictions on trading Thursday underlined Russia's economic isolation and the pressure the financial system is under despite central bank efforts to curb market plunges.

Foreigners could not sell and traders were barred from short selling or betting prices will fall while the government has said it will spend $10 billion on shares in coming months, a move that should support prices.

Russian stocks were only a small part of emerging market share indexes even before the war and only for those with a high risk tolerance, given extensive cronyism, nontransparent accounting and widespread state interference. They lost whatever remaining interest they had for foreign investors when the Moscow Exchange was dubbed "uninvestable" about a week into the war.

Tim Ash, senior emerging markets sovereign strategist at BlueBay Asset Management, said reopened trading was "deeply managed" and suggested that "for those Russians with some spare cash, there is nothing much else to buy as hedge to inflation and currency collapse."

The benchmark MOEX index gained 4.3% as some companies partially recovered losses from the plunge on the day of the invasion. Airline Aeroflot bucked the positive trend by losing 16.4% — not a surprise after the U.S., European Union and others banned Russian planes from their airspaces.

The economic turmoil in Russia from sanctions and the war has been severe. There have been bank runs and panic buying of sugar and other staples.

US jobless claims at lowest mark since 1969

By Matt Ott
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits last week fell to its lowest level in 52 years as the U.S. job market continues to show strength in the midst of rising costs and an ongoing virus pandemic.

Jobless claims fell by 28,000 to 187,000 for the week ending March 19, the lowest since September 1969, the Labor Department reported Thursday. First-time applications for jobless aid generally track the pace of layoffs.

The four-week average for claims, which compensates for weekly volatility, also fell to levels not seen in five decades. The Labor Department reported that the four-week moving average tumbled to 211,750 from the previous week's 223,250.

In total, 1,350,000 Americans were collecting jobless aid the week that ended March 12, another five-decade low.

Earlier this month, the government reported that employers added a robust 678,000 jobs in February, the largest monthly total since July.

The unemployment rate dropped to 3.8%, from 4% in January, extending a sharp decline in joblessness to its lowest level since before the pandemic erupted two years ago.

U.S. businesses posted a near-record level of open jobs in January — 11.3 million — a trend has helped pad workers' pay and added to inflationary pressures.

The Federal Reserve launched a high-risk effort last week to tame the worst inflation since the early 1980s, raising its benchmark short-term interest rate by a quarter-point and signaling up to six additional rate hikes this year.

The hikes will eventually mean higher loan rates for many consumers and businesses.

BUSINESS BRIEFING

Southwest to add 4th fare category

DALLAS — Southwest Airlines will add a fourth fare category as part of changes designed to attract more business travelers and boost revenue.

The new fare level will be priced higher than Southwest's cheapest tickets but below the airline's top two fare categories. Southwest executives think this will fill the large price gap between the cheapest fares, called Wanna Get Away, and more-expensive tickets.

Consumers who buy the new fare level, called Wanna Get Away Plus, will get 33% more frequent-flyer points than the basic ticket, and they will be able to transfer the value of a ticket to another Southwest customer. Airline officials said the changes will begin in May or June.

Average Wall St. bonuses a record

NEW YORK — Soaring profits on Wall Street helped drive up the average bonus paid to employees in New York City's securities industry to a record $257,500 for last year, the state comptroller reported.

The average securities industry bonus was 20% higher than 2020 and came out of a bonus pool that grew to $45 billion, according to annual estimates from state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

DiNapoli cited pretax profits through the first three quarters of 2021 for broker/dealer operations on the New York Stock Exchange, which increased by 19.6% to $44.9 billion.

The securities industry accounts for one-fifth of private sector wages in New York City, despite comprising 5% of private sector employment.

Jobless claims

Initial unemployment claims, seasonally adjusted, in millions per week



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor TNS

BUSINESS



The Abbott manufacturing plant in Sturgis, Michigan. A report by federal safety inspectors says the facility is linked to a cluster of illnesses. **BRANDON WATSON/STURGIS JOURNAL 2010**

FDA details problems at plant behind recalled baby formula

By Matthew Perrone
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Baby formula maker Abbott failed to maintain sanitary conditions and procedures at the Michigan manufacturing plant recently linked to a cluster of infant illnesses, according to findings released this week by federal safety inspectors.

The Food and Drug Administration posted its initial inspection findings from the Abbott plant that's been tied to several infant hospitalizations, including two deaths, due to a rare bacterial infection. Abbott recalled various lots of three popular powdered infant formulas in mid-February. FDA inspectors have been on-site inspecting the Sturgis, Michigan, facility since late January.

Abbott didn't maintain clean surfaces used in producing and handling the powdered formula, according to the FDA inspection, which concluded last week. Additionally, inspectors found a history of contamination with the bacteria, known as cronobacter, including eight instances between fall 2019 and February of this year.

The report gives the agency's preliminary findings and is likely to be followed by a formal report and a warning to the company.

Food safety advocates who have followed the recall noted that neither the FDA nor the company has been able to explain what caused the contamination.

"This sheds a little more light on what went wrong, but we still don't have all the answers," said Sarah Sorscher of the Center for Science in the Public Interest. "Abbott and the FDA really need to do more work to get to the bottom of what happened so we can prevent the next outbreak."

Abbott said in a statement it is "taking this very seriously and working closely with the FDA to implement corrective actions."

Abbott has not confirmed how many units have been recalled, but the company's brands include some of the best-selling baby formulas in the world, including Similac, Alimentum and EleCare. The company says it continues to produce baby formula at its other plants in the U.S. and overseas.

The recalls have exacerbated ongoing shortages of infant formula due to supply chain issues.

Infections with the cronobacter bacteria are rare but can be fatal in babies. Almost all outbreaks reported in the U.S. have been linked to powdered baby formulas, which don't undergo the same high temperatures used to kill germs in many other foods. Manufacturers have long said that it's impossible to eliminate all bacteria from the formulas.

There had been little new information about the recall since last month, despite requests from Senate lawmakers for Abbott to turn over documents on conditions at the Michigan plant.

The recalled Abbott products can be identified by examining the coding on the bottom of each container. The affected formulas all have an expiration date of April 1, 2022, or later. The company has set up a website where parents can check if products have been recalled.

Ukrainians get help fighting Putin from gunmakers in US

By Joshua Goodman
Associated Press



Adrian Kellgren, director of industrial production of KelTec, holds a boxed 9mm rifle similar to ones being shipped to Ukraine to help fight Russia. **PHELAN M. EBENHACK/AP**

MIAMI — Adrian Kellgren's family-owned gun company in Florida was left holding a $200,000 shipment of semi-automatic rifles after a longtime customer in Ukraine suddenly went silent during Vladimir Putin's invasion of the country.

Fearing the worst, Kellgren and his company KelTec decided to put those stranded 400 guns to use, sending them to Ukraine's nascent resistance movement to help civilians fight back against a Russian military that has been repeatedly shelling their apartment buildings, schools, hospitals and hiding places.

"The American people want to do something," said Kellgren, a former Navy pilot. "We enjoy our freedoms, we cherish those things. And when we see a group of people out there getting hammered like this, it's heartbreaking."

KelTec's donation is a high-profile example of Americans collecting guns, ammunition, body armor, helmets and other tactical gear in response to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's promise to arm his citizens. But many similar grassroots efforts have been snarled by inexperience with the complex web of regulations governing the international shipment of such equipment.

Kellgren, who has dealt with such red tape for years, managed to connect through a Ukrainian neighbor with a diplomat in the Ukrainian Embassy who helped him secure a federal arms export license in just four days. That process can often take months.

Last week, as Congress debated whether to send more advanced weapons and defense systems to Ukraine, workers at KelTec's warehouse forklifted four pallets containing their 9 mm foldable rifles for delivery to an undisclosed NATO-run facility. From there, the shipment's new recipient, Ukraine's Ministry of Defense, will be responsible for smuggling the weapons into the war zone.

"That's when the real derring-do and heroism begins," Kellgren said.

From California to New York, elected officials, sheriff's departments and nonprofits say they have also collected thousands of sets of body armor and millions of rounds of ammunition for Ukraine. Many of the organizers have no clue how to navigate international arms export rules, which sometimes require approvals from the Departments of State, Commerce and Defense to ship even non-lethal tactical gear. Organizers of one such drive in New York are piggybacking on KelTec's license to export 60 long guns they recently collected.

The National Shooting Sports Foundation, a trade group for firearms manufacturers, recently distributed step-by-step instructions to its more than 8,000 members on how to apply for an expedited export license. They also provided a list of specific sniper rifles, pistols and ammo requested by Ukraine's Embassy in Washington.

KelTec hopes to arrange more shipments in the future. Its license allows the export of up to 10,000 weapons and the company has offered the Ukrainians their own production line and weekly shipments.

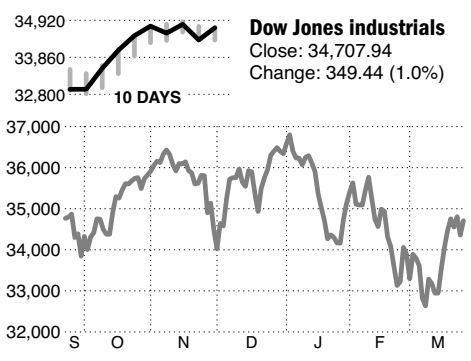
While rifles are no match for Putin's firepower of Sukhoi fighter jets and cluster bombs, they can play an important role if the Russians get bogged down in street-to-street combat, retired U.S. Army Major John Spencer said.

The semi-automatic rifles KelTec is shipping are perhaps even more valuable than high-tech, anti-aircraft missiles that require extensive training beyond the reach of most civilians, many of whom have never even held a gun before, he said.

MARKET RUNDOWN

Friday, March 25, 2022

DOW 34,707.94 +349.44 ▲
10-YR T-BOND 2.34% +.03 ▲
GOLD $1,961.60 +25.00 ▲



Domestic Indexes

	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD
DOW Indus.	34,707.94	+349.44	-4.49%
DOW Trans.	16,329.40	+115.27	-.90%
DOW Util.	1,000.82	+9.29	+2.04%
NYSE Comp.	16,701.82	+143.29	-2.69%
Nasdaq Comp.	14,191.84	+269.23	-9.29%
S&P 500	4,520.16	+63.92	-5.16%
S&P 400	2,693.66	+29.29	-5.22%
Wilshire 5000	45,551.31	+626.23	-6.00%
Russell 2000	2,075.44	+23.23	-7.57%

Commodities

FUELS	CLOSE	PREV.	YTD
Crude Oil (bbl)	112.34	114.93	+49.37%
Natural Gas (mm btu)	5.40	5.23	+44.80%
Unleaded Gas (gal)	3.39	3.44	+52.12%
METALS	**CLOSE**	**PREV.**	**YTD**
Gold (oz)	1,961.60	1,936.60	+7.34%
Silver (oz)	25.90	25.17	+11.03%

(Previous and change figures reflect current contract.)

Foreign Exchange

	ForEx in U.S. $	U.S. $ in ForEx
Britain	1.3182	.7586
Canada	.7970	1.2547
China	.1570	6.3678
Euro	1.0998	.9093
Japan	.008179	122.26
Mexico	.049690	20.1250

Money Rates

	CLOSE	PREV. WK.
Prime rate	3.50	3.50
3-mo. T-Bill	0.51	0.41
6-mo. T-Bill	0.95	0.80
5-yr T-Note	2.37	2.17
10-yr T-Note	2.34	2.19
30-yr T-Bond	2.51	2.48

Global Markets

	CLOSE	CHG.	%CHG.	%YTD
Frankfurt	14,273.79	-9.86	-.07%	-10.14%
London	7,467.38	+6.75	+.09%	+1.12%
Hong Kong	21,945.95	-208.13	-.94%	-6.20%
Nikkei	28,110.39	+70.23	+.25%	-2.37%

Stocks of Local Interest

STOCK (TICKER)	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD %CHG
AMC Entertainment A (AMC)	20.23	-.51	-25.6
AT&T Inc (T)	23.33	+.12	-5.2
Adv Micro Dev (AMD)	120.53	+6.61	-16.2
AgriFORCE Gr Sys Ltd (AGRI)	4.91	+1.27	+136.1
American Airlines Gp (AAL)	16.72	+.51	-6.9
Amphenol Corp (APH)	75.42	+1.19	-13.8
Ampio Pharmaceutical (AMPE)	.56	+.13	-2.5
Apple Inc (AAPL)	174.07	+3.86	-2.0
Avangrid Inc (AGR)	44.91	+.04	-10.0
Bank of America (BAC)	43.07	-.02	-3.2
Barnes Group (B)	41.92	+.55	-10.0
BitNile Holdings Inc (NILE)	.74	+.04	-38.2
Booking Holdings (BKNG)	2261.99	+102.24	-5.7
Brist Myr Sqb (BMY)	72.41	+1.03	+16.1
CVS Health Corp (CVS)	108.05	+1.85	+4.7
Carnival Corp (CCL)	18.49	+.19	-8.1
Carrier Global Corp (CARR)	46.17	-.35	-14.9
Charter Communic (CHTR)	559.32	-.67	-14.2
Cigna Corp (CI)	242.10	+3.60	+5.4
Cleveland-Cliffs Inc (CLF)	32.67	+3.51	+50.1
Comcast Corp A (CMCSA)	46.80	+.28	-7.0
DiDi Global Inc (DIDI)	3.80	-.01	-23.7
Disney (DIS)	138.96	+1.32	-10.3
EMCOR Group Inc (EME)	114.63	+.98	-10.0
Ethan Allen (ETD)	26.25	+.09	-.2
Eversource Energy (ES)	85.42	+.74	-6.1
Exela Technologies (XELA)	.46	-.01	-48.1
Ford Motor (F)	16.83	+.15	-19.0
FuelCell Energy (FCEL)	6.62	+.05	+27.3
Gen Dynamics (GD)	241.00	+1.31	+15.6
Gen Electric (GE)	94.12	+.42	-.4
Ginkgo Bioworks Hldg (DNA)	3.72	+.20	-55.2
Hartford Fn Sv (HIG)	71.64	+.76	+3.8
Honeywell Intl (HON)	194.69	+2.35	-6.6
Horizon Tech Fin (HRZN)	14.01	+.02	-12.0
Hycroft Mining Holdg (HYMC)	1.32	+.04	+115.0
IQIYI Inc (IQ)	4.77	+.09	+4.6
Imperial Petroleum (IMPP)	1.79	-.31	-16.4
Infosys Ltd (INFY)	24.67	+.36	-2.5
Intel Corp (INTC)	51.62	+3.35	+.2
JX Luxventure Ltd (LLL)	4.30	+.92	+90.3
Kaman (KAMN)	44.93	+.56	+4.1
Keycorp (KEY)	23.60	+.08	+2.0
Lincoln Natl Corp (LNC)	66.04	+.61	-3.3
MGM Resorts Intl (MGM)	42.16	+.75	-6.1
Meta Platforms Inc (FB)	219.57	+6.11	-34.7
MetLife Inc (MET)	70.19	+.77	+12.3
Micron Tech (MU)	78.21	+2.56	-16.0
Microsoft Corp (MSFT)	304.10	+4.61	-9.6
Mullen Automotive (MULN)	3.00	-.11	-42.6
Nikola Corp (NKLA)	9.66	+.52	-2.1
Novartis AG (NVS)	86.64	+1.09	-.9
Nvidia Corporation (NVDA)	281.50	+25.16	-4.3
Occid Petl (OXY)	57.75	-2.09	+99.2
Otis Worldwide Corp (OTIS)	77.42	+.98	-11.1
Palantir Technol (PLTR)	13.39	+.21	-26.5
Peoples Utd Fncl (PBCT)	21.17	+.09	+18.8
Pfizer Inc (PFE)	52.59	+.40	-10.9
Pinduoduo Inc ADS (PDD)	44.94	-4.46	-22.9
Pitney Bowes (PBI)	5.17	+.08	-22.0
Prudential Fncl (PRU)	119.16	+2.22	+10.1
Pub Svc Ent Gp (PEG)	67.54	+.74	+1.2
Raytheon Technolog (RTX)	101.71	+.48	+18.2
Rogers Corp (ROG)	272.26	+.49	-.3
SS&C Technlogies (SSNC)	76.80	+.12	-6.3
SoFi Technologies (SOFI)	9.47	+.10	-40.1
Sthwstn Energy (SWN)	5.95	+.19	+27.7
Stanley Black & Deck (SWK)	138.74	-2.54	-26.4
Starwood Prop Trust (STWD)	23.91	+.10	-1.6
Sundial Growers Inc (SNDL)	.75	+.14	+29.1
Takung Art Co (TKAT)	2.66	+.21	-34.3
Tellurian Inc (TELL)	4.85	+.44	+57.5
Terex Corp (TEX)	37.77	+.09	-14.1
Tilray Brands Inc (TLRY)	6.97	+1.25	-.9
Travelers Cos (TRV)	184.22	+2.60	+17.8
Uber Technologies (UBER)	34.70	+1.64	-17.2
United Rentals (URI)	358.98	+4.55	+8.0
US Steel Corp (X)	38.20	+2.33	+60.4
UnitedHealth Group (UNH)	513.46	+10.23	+2.3
Virtus Invest (VRTS)	241.68	+3.71	-18.7
Voya Financial (VOYA)	66.64	+.81	+.5
Webster Financial (WBS)	57.81	+.63	+3.5
White Mtns Insur (WTM)	1078.11	-9.83	+6.3
World Wrestling Ent (WWE)	61.43	+.05	+24.5
XPO Logistics Inc (XPO)	76.16	+.89	-1.6
Xerox Holdings Corp (XRX)	20.15	+.36	-11.0
Zosano Pharma Corp (ZSAN)	.25	+.02	-46.2

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OPINION

What happens in Russia if Putin can't win in Ukraine?

By Hal Brands
Bloomberg Opinion

The world has been transfixed by Ukraine's fight for survival. As the war drags on, we'd better start considering what will become of Russia, as well.

President Vladimir Putin's nation has now been subjected to an isolation more sudden and total than that experienced by any major power in recent history. What that leads to may not be pretty.

Russia has been hit with punishing economic, trade and financial sanctions. It is careering toward a debt default, as a rapid technological decoupling is also underway. Foreign firms are fleeing the country.

Russia isn't some tin-pot tyranny like Cuba or North Korea; it is a major power whose population was, until recently, deeply connected to its larger global environment. Now, Russia is suffering a degree of international ostracism that typically happens only when a country is at war with the world.

What will this mean for Moscow if its conflict with Ukraine drags on?

The rosiest scenario is a "Moscow Spring," in which the costs of conflict lead to regime change and a rebirth of the democracy Russia experienced fleetingly in the 1990s. Russian elites push Putin aside and make peace with Ukraine. Having experienced the consequences of aggression and autocracy, the more urban, liberal swaths of Russian society demand a broader political opening and the country's reintegration into the world. Just as isolation helped convince South Africa to ditch apartheid in the late 1980s, foreign opprobrium forces dramatic change in Moscow.

The odds of this are slim. Two decades of Putinism have left Russia with a weak, fragmented opposition. The president has surely tried to coup-proof his regime by co-opting the security and intelligence services and pitting them against one another. And even if Russia did experience a revolution, look out: The history of the 1990s cautions us that instability and chaos could follow.

A more plausible scenario is "Wounded Giant." Putin uses his control of the security services to hang onto power and repress whatever popular discontent isolation produces. He exploits the black market sanctions inevitably create to compensate cronies. Russia becomes more dependent on China as it seeks economic and technological alternatives to the West.

What changes is not so much Russian policies but Russian power: The cost of slogging ahead is continued attrition of the economy, retarded technological modernization and a long-term weakening of Moscow's military potential. This scenario isn't great for the Western and Pacific democracies, but it isn't terrible, either.

There is a third, darker scenario: "Tehran on the Volga." Isolation and radicalization go hand in hand. Educated, upwardly mobile Russians leave the country, ridding the regime of its most outspoken liberal critics. Hard-liners embrace a "resistance economy" premised on self-sufficiency and avoiding the contaminating influence of the West. Aggressive internal purges, relentless propaganda and the fanning of militant nationalism produce a Russian variant of fascism. When Putin eventually falls, he is replaced by an equally repressive, ambitious and xenophobic leader.

Russia thus becomes a superpowered Iran with nuclear weapons — a country permanently estranged from the world and compensates for weakness with heightened belligerency. Far from retreating in its confrontation with the West, this Russia might dial up the intensity of that struggle — pursuing wide-ranging programs of sabotage in Europe or more aggressively training its cyberweapons on targets in the U.S. and other democratic countries.

This exercise illustrates two points.

First, Washington needs to start thinking seriously about Russia's long-term trajectory. In 1989, the administration of President George H.W. Bush created a group to consider what might happen amid earthshaking changes in the Soviet Union. Regardless of what happens in this crisis, Russia is big and powerful enough that its trajectory will be vital to the overall health of the international order — which means that the U.S. needs to be ready.

Second, be careful what you wish for. The U.S. and its allies are rightly using devastating sanctions, along with tenacious Ukrainian resistance, to impose heavy costs on a Russian regime that has flagrantly violated the most basic norms of international behavior. Appeasement and military intervention are the only obvious, and abhorrent, alternatives to this policy. But we have only begun to consider what its long-term consequences might be.

The war in Ukraine will eventually end, but America's problems with Russia may only be getting started.

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The state of our high-minded politics



Gail Collins

Hey, it's spring, people — all kinds of fun things coming around the bend. Picnics! Post-pandemic parties! Senatorial primaries!

Hey, we're still citizens, right? Come on. Get focused.

Let's take a look at a couple of the biggest upcoming political contests: races in Ohio and Pennsylvania. In Ohio there are approximately 10,000 people running for the Republican Senate nomination. Things can get pretty intense. One recent candidate forum featured Mike Gibbons, an investment banker, yelling "You don't know squat!" at one of his adversaries, a former state treasurer, Josh Mandel, who retorted, "Two tours in Iraq!"

Another major figure in the Ohio primary is Jane Timken, a former party official who is running as "the real Trump conservative." A lot of Republicans are trying to hitch their wagon to that shifty star.

What do you think "real Trump conservative" actually means? The conservative who'll increase the national debt by more than a third? Or the conservative who got Vladimir Putin to toe the line by threatening to blow up churches in Moscow? That's Rudy Giuliani's latest Trump story, and I can't summon the energy to wonder whether it actually happened.

There's a general Republican assumption that the key to winning a primary is getting Donald Trump's endorsement, and yeah, that's probably true. Unless he changes his mind and takes it back. Did you notice what happened at the end of that big, massively promoted fundraising contest that promised the winner a trip to have dinner with him in New Orleans? The one where he claimed he'd already "booked you a ticket"?

Nothing! According to The Washington Post, nobody actually got the prize. Now really, if you were one of the many donors who sent in a contribution hoping for that one-on-one, do you feel:

A. Disappointed but understanding that Trump has a lot to do, what with the lawsuits and criminal conspiracy accusations and all.

B. Hopeful there'll be another contest that'll start off with eight or 10 drinks with a Trump campaign adviser.

C. Totally alienated and planning to vote only for a Republican Senate primary candidate who never mentions Trump by name.

OK, I know you understand there are no such candidates. But let's go back to those



Mike Gibbons, center, and Josh Mandel, right, exchange heated words during an event on March 18 in Columbus, Ohio. **ANDREW SPEAR/GETTY**

Senate primaries. The early voting states are mainly Republican, so there's not a heck of a lot of drama on the Democratic side. Except, maybe, for Pennsylvania.

The two best-known contenders there are Rep. Conor Lamb and Lt. Gov. John Fetterman. Lamb won a big upset victory in a 2018 congressional election during which his opponent sneered that Lamb was "someone who's young and idealistic, who still hopes he can change the world." Which, at the time, I felt might go down as the most depressing political attack in modern history.

Fetterman, is 6-foot-8, shaves his head, sports a goatee and has a well-documented habit of showing up for public events wearing baggy shorts; he once wore them at a visit to a bridge collapse — a wardrobe choice that was notable both because he was there to meet President Joe Biden and because it was freezing.

On the Republican side, Dr. Mehmet Oz, who became famous as a health guru on Oprah Winfrey's show, is running against about a trillion other hopefuls. The most prominent is David McCormick, who would probably like you to think of him as a former undersecretary of the Treasury, rather than a former hedge fund CEO who still needs to answer some questions about the Pennsylvania teachers' retirement fund.

Oz, who's been photographed kissing his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, got a rather muted comment from Winfrey, who responded to news of his candidacy by saying, staunchly: "One of the greatest things about our democracy is that every citizen can decide to run for public office." He may not have Oprah, but he has been endorsed by none other than Sean Hannity.

Ohio is going to have to pick somebody to succeed Sen. Rob Portman, a Republican who ranked fairly high on the bipartisanship meter, at least by our current pathetic standards. The major Republican candidates are all desperately courting a Trump endorsement, so it's likely that in the future we're going to see less hands-across-the-table from Ohio and more stop-the-steal.

On the plus side, it's been lively. During that recent debate, Gibbons rather grudgingly acknowledged that women were "probably" oppressed by being denied the right to vote but added that "there were not a lot of women that were in combat in World War I and World War II."

Mandel's campaign issues page starts right off with "Fighting for President Trump's America First agenda." Gibbons calls himself "Trump tough." And Timken, the candidate who was endorsed by Portman, is billing herself as "the real Trump conservative."

If you're a Democrat, there are two ways to view these Republican Senate primaries. One is to hope the nominee is somebody so nuts, he or she will have less of a chance of winning in the fall. The other is to figure that if there's very likely going to be a Republican majority next year, we'd be better off with as many reasonable Republicans as possible.

Reasonable Republicans who feel obliged to treat Donald Trump like the Second Coming. What can I tell you? We live in America, not Shangri-La.

Collins is a columnist for The New York Times.

Lawmakers should not be kept from reelection in wake of Jan. 6

By Hans Von Spakovsky
The Heritage Foundation

No matter what one may think about the events of Jan. 6, 2021, efforts now underway to block certain members of Congress from running for reelection are without merit.

Several voters have filed a challenge in North Carolina to the candidacy of Republican Rep. Madison Cawthorn, seeking to have him disqualified from the ballot. A similar lawsuit has been filed in Wisconsin against Republican Sen. Ron Johnson, Rep. Tom Tiffany and Rep. Scott Fitzgerald, claiming they "are no longer qualified" to seek reelection under the 14th Amendment because they participated in an "insurrection" on Jan. 6, including by supporting objections to the certification of certain electoral votes.

It is noteworthy that not a single protester arrested for criminal trespass, assaulting police officers, and other actions at the U.S. Capitol has been charged under 18 U.S.C. § 2383, which makes it a crime to engage in "any rebellion or insurrection against the authority of the United States." Additionally, no member of Congress has been arrested, charged or indicted for any actions taken on Jan. 6.

Yet the challengers are claiming that these members of Congress are disqualified from holding office under Section 3 of the 14th Amendment, which was ratified in 1868. Section 3 was aimed at the former Confederacy and said no one could be a member of Congress or hold any federal office who had previously held such a position if they "engaged in insurrection or rebellion."

But Section 3 also had a unique provision not found in any other amendment to the Constitution. It gave Congress the power "by a vote of two-thirds of each House" to remove this disqualification. Congress did exactly that in two amnesty bills: one in 1872 that kept a limited number of disqualifications for certain members of Congress and the military, and a second in 1898 that got rid of those remaining disqualifications. The plain language of these acts permanently removed the insurrection disqualification in Section 3 from the 14th Amendment.

Additionally, Article I of the Constitution lists the three qualifications required to be a representative and senator (age, citizenship and residency). In 1995, in U.S. Term Limits, Inc. v. Thornton, the U.S. Supreme Court said that no state can impose any additional qualifications on any candidate running for Congress. That would certainly include candidates being forced to prove their innocence regarding any claims that they were somehow involved in the events of Jan. 6.

The Supreme Court also said that a state cannot dress up an additional qualification as a ballot access measure, since that is "an indirect attempt to accomplish what the Constitution prohibits [the state] from accomplishing directly." Any attempts by officials or courts to refuse to allow a candidate's name to be listed on the ballot because of his or her alleged participation in "insurrection" clearly fail this test.

Finally, attempts to disqualify candidates because they objected to the certification of certain electoral votes in the joint session of Congress on Jan. 6 have no legal merit. The objections and the subsequent votes on the objections were done in full compliance with the process outlined in the Electoral Count Act of 1887.

The Electoral Count Act provides that an objection can be filed jointly by a senator and a representative and upon such an objection being made, the joint session for the counting of electoral votes is temporarily suspended while Congress debates and votes on the objection. If the objection is voted down, the counting resumes, which is exactly what happened on Jan. 6, 2021.

The effort to have members of Congress barred from having their names on ballots based on claims that they participated in an "insurrection" on Jan. 6 or objected to electoral votes should fail. Congress permanently eliminated the insurrection disqualification in the 14th Amendment in amnesty acts that are still in force today, and the objections to the electoral votes were filed in accordance with federal law.

All of these efforts and threats are a desperate attempt to gain political advantage through unconstitutional actions. They are a waste of time and resources and should be dismissed as such.

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Tag Sales & Flea Markets

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Announcements

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Hartford

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON A SUPPLEMENTAL SEWER ASSESSMENT UPON
THE BENEFIT OF SEWER AVAILIABILITY ACCRUING TO APPROVED OR**

**CONSTRUCTED RESIDENTIAL UNITS
THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103**

March 25, 2022

The Metropolitan District will hold a public hearing at The Metropolitan District Headquarters located at 555 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut, on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 4:00 P.M. for the purpose of establishing and levying a supplemental sewer assessment against certain real property and new or expanded buildings or structures approved for construction or constructed thereon known as 38-42 Elm Street, Hartford, Connecticut and owned by Peabody Unlimited LLC.
All interested parties, both in favor or against said assessment, may appear to be heard.

John S. Mirtle
District Clerk
3/25/22 7176722

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON A SUPPLEMENTAL SEWER ASSESSMENT UPON
THE BENEFIT OF SEWER AVAILIABILITY ACCRUING TO APPROVED OR**

**CONSTRUCTED RESIDENTIAL UNITS
THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103**

March 25, 2022

The Metropolitan District will hold a public hearing at The Metropolitan District Headquarters located at 555 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut, on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 4:00 P.M. for the purpose of establishing and levying a supplemental sewer assessment against certain real property and new or expanded buildings or structures approved for construction or constructed thereon known as 170 Ridge Road, Wethersfield, Connecticut and owned by 170 Ridge Road, LLC.
All interested parties, both in favor or against said assessment, may appear to be heard.

John S. Mirtle
District Clerk
3/25/22 7176740

Newington CT Minority Opportunity – Silktown Roofing is currently soliciting SBE/MBE/DBE subcontractors for Public Notice; Newington CT- Anna Reynolds Elementary School Renovation. Material Supply; flat stock metal. Our bid submits on Tuesday, March 29, 2022. If additional time is needed for your submission please call our estimating department. Interested parties are asked to contact us at subcontracting@silktownroofing.com. An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Thank you,

Subcontracting

Silktown Roofing, Inc.

27 Pleasant Street, Manchester, CT 06040

O: 860.647.0198

F: 860.646.0775

subcontracting@silktownroofing.com

www.silktownroofing.com

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer
3/25/22 7177647

Hartford

**CITY OF HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS**

The fourth quarterly installment of taxes on the Grand List of October 1, 2020, for the Homeowner's Tax Credit Program, are due and payable on April 1, 2022.
Failure to pay the tax due April 1, 2022, on or before May 2, 2022, will cause the tax to become delinquent and subject to interest, from the due date, at the rate of 1 ½ % per full or partial month. Any delinquent tax is subject to a minimum interest charge of two dollars ($2.00).
Since failure to receive a bill does not invalidate the tax or, in the event of delinquency, respective penalties, taxpayers who do not receive a bill by the end of the first full week of April should request a duplicate from the Division of Assessment and Collection.
Payments may be mailed, utilizing the envelopes included with the bills, on the City's website, www.HartfordCT.gov/tax, or in person at the Office of the Tax Collector, 550 Main Street, Room 106, Hartford, Connecticut, Monday through Wednesday between 8:15 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Thursday between 8:15 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and Friday between 8:15 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. excluding holidays.

Nancy Raich, CCMC
Tax Collector
City of Hartford
3/25/2022 7162156

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON A SUPPLEMENTAL SEWER ASSESSMENT UPON THE BENEFIT OF SEWER AVAILIABILITY ACCRUING TO APPROVED OR CONSTRUCTED RESIDENTIAL UNITS

**THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103**

March 25, 2022

The Metropolitan District will hold a public hearing at The Metropolitan District Headquarters located at 555 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut, on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 4:00 P.M. for the purpose of establishing and levying a supplemental sewer assessment against certain real property and new or expanded buildings or structures approved for construction or constructed thereon known as 36 Lewis Street, Hartford, Connecticut and owned by 36 Lewis Street LLC.

All interested parties, both in favor or against said assessment, may appear to be heard.

John S. Mirtle
District Clerk
3/26/22 7176715

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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON A SUPPLEMENTAL SEWER ASSESSMENT UPON
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**CONSTRUCTED RESIDENTIAL UNITS
THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103**

March 25, 2022

The Metropolitan District will hold a public hearing at The Metropolitan District Headquarters located at 555 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut, on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 4:00 P.M. for the purpose of establishing and levying a supplemental sewer assessment against certain real property and new or expanded buildings or structures approved for construction or constructed thereon known as 50 Morgan Street, Hartford,
Connecticut and owned by Shelbourne Axela LLC.
All interested parties, both in favor or against said assessment, may appear to be heard.

John S. Mirtle
District Clerk
3/25/22 7176730

Connecticut

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3/23-3/27/2022 7175168

**Legal Notice
Request for Proposals
Automated Work Zone Speed Control
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The Connecticut Department of Transportation is seeking to engage a contracting firm to provide services related to Automated Work Zone Speed Control pilot project. More detailed information regarding this project can be found at:
https://webprocure.perfect.com/wp-web-public/#/bidboard/bid/98540?customerid=51
Connecticut Department of Transportation
An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer
3/17-4/1/2022 7171086

**TOWN OF DEEP RIVER
NOTICE OF DECISION**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Deep River Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commission, at a regular meeting held on March 10, 2022, took the following actions:

Granted Permit No. 2-22 to Steven Simms and Linda Lemons for the purpose of construction of a single family home 74 feet from wetlands on property of Alan and Steven Zack on Main Street (Map 59, Lot 1I), subject to conditions on file in the Deep River Town Clerk's office.

Granted Permit No. 3-22 to Robert L. Doane, Jr., PE., L.S. for the purpose of construction of a pond on property of Seth G. Mitchell at 118 Cedar Lake Road (Map 19, Lot 4), subject to conditions on file in the Deep River Town Clerk's Office.

Granted Permit No. MA4-22 to Joe Wren, P.E. for the purpose of removing and replacing the existing septic system with a new septic system on property of Dawn Norton at 30 Hemlock Terrace Extension (Map 47, Lot 42).

Tanner Steeves, Chairman
Deep River Conservation & Inland Wetlands Commission
3/25/2022 7175747

Connecticut

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE: The following self-storage cube contents containing household and other goods will be sold for cash by CubeSmart, 55 Research Parkway, Old Saybrook ,CT 06475 to satisfy a lien on April 7, 2022 at approx. 12:00 PM at www.storagetreasures.com
Unit 2305: Robert Sobolewski
3/24, 3/25/2022 7172228

March 21, 2022 Bid Notice 2200 for The Diaper Bank of Connecticut Furnishing Three Million (3,000,000) Infant And Toddler DiapersTo The Diaper Bank Of Connecticut is available at the Diaper Bank of Connecticut's website: www.thediaperbank.org/legal-notices.
3/21- 3/25/2022 7172882

**EAST HADDAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
NATHAN HALE-RAY MIDDLE SCHOOL
BASKETBALL COURT RESURFACING**

INVITATION TO BID

The Town of East Haddam, Connecticut and the East Haddam Board of Education (collectively the Town"") is soliciting bids for Resurfacing the Exterior Basketball Court located at Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School, located at 73 Clark Gates Road, Moodus CT.

Based upon a preliminary evaluation performed by the Town, the scope of the project is briefly described as follows:
The project included removal of current surface, regrading, adding stone and resurfacing with new materials for an exterior basketball court, 70' by 106'. Include costs for temporary removal and replacement of existing fence.
Add alternate: Pavement Markings
The project must be completed between June 20, 2022, and August 19, 2022.
There will be a walkthrough of the site on Monday, April 4 at 3:30 PM.

All sealed bids will be accepted at the Board of Education's Office on Tuesday, April 12 at 2 PM and will be opened at that time and date. No FAX bid will be accepted.

The Town of East Haddam reserves the right to waive any informalities or defects in any bid. The Town reserves the right to accept other than the lowest bid if the Board of Selectmen, in its sole discretion, deems it to be in the best interest of the Town to do so. Bids, amendments to bids or withdrawal of bids after the time set for bid acceptance will not be considered.

Return Bid to
Brian S. Reas
Superintendent of Schools
East Haddam Public Schools
Municipal Office Complex
1 Plains Road, PO Box 401
Moodus, CT 06469
3/25/2022 7177098

New Britain CT Minority Opportunity – Silktown Roofing is currently soliciting SBE/MBE/DBE subcontractors for Public Notice; New Britain CT- Osgood Park Improvements. Trades; carpentry. Material Supply; flat stock metal, lumber. Our bid submits on Monday, March 28, 2022. If additional time is needed for your submission please call our estimating department. Interested parties are asked to contact us at subcontracting@silktownroofing.com. An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.
3/25/2022 7177465

Coventry CT Minority Opportunity – Silktown Roofing is currently soliciting SBE/MBE/DBE subcontractors for Public Notice; Coventry CT-Booth & Dimock Library. Trades; carpentry, shingle roofing. Materials; lumber, shingles. Our bid submits on Monday, March 28, 2022. If additional time is needed for your submission please call our estimating department. Interested parties are asked to contact us at subcontracting@silktownroofing.com. An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.
3/25/2022 7177824



OBITUARIES BY TOWN

Berlin
Helen Anop
Bloomfield
Ethel B. Hall
Canton
Jennie Huff
Colchester
Edward M Lynch
Catheline L. Ouellette
Cromwell
Robert F. Byrnie
East Granby
William H. Burhans, Jr.
East Hartford
Catheline L. Ouellette
Hartford
Ethel B. Hall
Edward M Lynch
Bailardo L. Michael
Kimberly J. Sarafopoulos
Newington
Maria Sousa
Old Saybrook
Robert F. Byrnie
Other Towns in CT
Rev. David L. Cannon
Rocky Hill
Bailardo L. Michael
South Windsor
Melvin D. Stein
Southington
Helen Anop
West Hartford
Maria Sousa
Melvin D. Stein
Wethersfield
Pearl Wallace
Windsor
James T. Hunt, Jr.
Windsor Locks
James T. Hunt, Jr.
OUT OF STATE
Edward M. Lynch
Tucson, AZ
Bailardo L. Michael
La Quinta

*** Denotes name listing only.**
Please note: not all death notices are in alphabetical order.

OBITUARIES

Cannon, Rev. David L.



GROTON - On March 22, 2022, The Reverend David Lawrence Cannon passed from the hands of his daughter Ruth, son-in-law Tim, and long-time friend Norma into the waiting and loving arms of his wife Ann-etta and sons David and Andrew at Fairview in Groton, Connecticut. He was 84 years old.

Born on May 18, 1937 in Buffalo, New York, he was the eldest child of the late Raymond Theodore Cannon and Marian Laura Cannon Hodges (née Braman). David served in the United States Navy aboard the USS Valley Forge right after high school. He went on to college and graduated with his Bachelor's Degree from Springfield College in 1961. Having received a calling to serve God and others, he furthered his education and graduated and received his Master's Degree from Berkley Divinity School at Yale in 1964. In 1970, he completed his Certificate in Education, Guidance, and Counseling at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. Following Divinity School, he was ordained Deacon on June 11, 1964 by The Right Reverend Walter Gray, and Priest on December 19, 1964 by The Right Reverend J. Warren Hutchens.

On December 28, 1957, in Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church in Enfield, he was united in marriage to Annetta (née Newmarker). From that day on, they served the public, specifically the Town of Preston, as well as the broad educational community their entire lives.

Father Cannon will be remembered by so very many people whose lives were touched by his life-long work. He served as Vicar at St. James Episcopal Church in Poquetanuck for nearly fifty years. Weddings and baptisms brought him such joy. Funerals, although always hard on him, were where he shined. He always knew what to say and when to say it and brought such comfort to the people he loved as family.

Anyone who knew Father Cannon knew his passion for equal education for all. He was a champion for those who may not otherwise have educational opportunities available to them. One of his great sources of pride was his work on the State of Connecticut Board of Trustees of Regional Community Colleges. He took on everyone and anyone who tried to thwart the availability of education for all. Community College graduations were not a duty for he and his wife. He said, it was a privilege to be in the presence of each and every graduate.

Ecumenicalism was very important to Father Cannon. He was instrumental in ecumenical relationships between The Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Norwich and served on the Ecumenical Commission and also as the United States Delegate at the Anglican- Roman Catholic Conference in Rome. The highlight of that work in Rome for him was meeting Pope John Paul II.

He was a member, and later a Paul Harris Fellow, with the Norwich Rotary Club. He served on the Board of Directors for New London County ARC, Martin House, Madonna Place, American Cancer Society, Norwich Area Voluntary Action Center, and William W. Backus Hospital. A "proud Irisher" he was a member of the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick. He served as a faithful Chaplain to the Poquetanuck Volunteer Fire Department, Norwich State Hospital, and New London Detectives Association. During his life in Preston, he was a member of the Preston Historical Society, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Finance, Commission on the Aging, and Clergy Association.

He is survived by his sister Marcia and husband Bob of Columbia, South Carolina, his brother Raymond and wife Lynn of Concord, North Carolina; daughter Ruth Friess, her husband Timothy, and son Samuel of Gales Ferry; daughter-in-law Jolea Cannon of Norwich; "adopted sons" Reverend Ron Kolanowski (Art) and Cliff Marks (Ray); grandchildren Sarah and David Cannon, Megan and Molly Cannon, Stephen and Sydney Phelps; great-granddaughter Lillian Cannon; six nieces and nephews Jennifer, Heather, Susan, Krista, Shane, and Dustin; and very close family friend and caregiver Norma Courville.

He had survived many losses in his life but has endured due to his faith and optimism. He is predeceased by his parents, his wife Ann-etta Cannon, and his sons David Lawrence and Andrew Robert Cannon.

Words allude the family in trying to show our appreciation for each and every staff member of Fairview. We fear we may leave someone out and know it would be impossible to name every person. But know that we will forever be grateful for the dignified and loving care you gave our Da. You treated him and all his family as if we were your family. Every kind gesture or word was noticed and will be remembered. You are doing the work of angels and our appreciation runs deep.

If family and friends choose to honor his legacy of being a life-long and constant supporter of education, memorial contributions can be made to to Fairview, 235 Lestertown Road, Groton, Connecticut 06340. Please indicate "In memory of Father David L. Cannon". Memorial gifts will be used for scholarships for Fairview employees and their families to further their education and to show our huge gratitude for the compassionate care Fairview gave us.

The family will receive family and friends for a memorial visitation at St. James Episcopal Church, Route 2A, Preston on Wednesday, March 30th from 4-8 PM. A Mass of Christian Burial will be Saturday, April 23rd at 10:00 AM at St. James Episcopal Church.

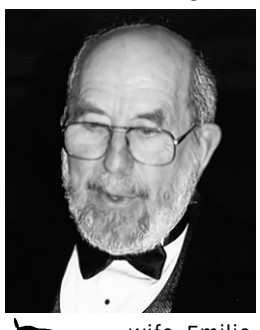
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Visit the obituary section on courant.com to share memories of loved ones.

OBITUARIES

Byrnie, Robert F.



Robert Farrell Byrnie, 91, of Cromwell, beloved husband of Mary (Eager) Byrnie, passed away on March 17, 2022 at Middlesex Hospital. Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late Leo and Anne (Conroy) Byrnie.
Besides his loving wife, Mary, Bob is survived by two sons, Gregory L. Byrnie and his wife Dawn of Cromwell and Matthew J. Byrnie and his wife Emilia of Alexandria, VA; a daughter Michelle S. Parker and her husband Alex of Ellicott City, MD; a sister Anne Grace and her husband James of Old Saybrook; seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.
Bob graduated from Torrington High School in 1947. After high school, Bob enlisted in the service and was a veteran of the Korean War as well as serving in Japan with the United States Air Force.
After an honorable discharge from the service, Bob attended the University of Connecticut and graduated from Southern Connecticut State University with a B.A. and M.A. in Art Education. He taught Art at the high school level in Bridgeport, Madison, Old Saybrook and North Branford. During Bob's retirement, he taught as a Substitute Teacher at Cromwell High School. At Old Saybrook High School, Bob designed many sets for their annual musicals and also taught in the Adult Education Program.
In his hometown of Cromwell, Bob was a member of St. John Church. Bob and his family were very active in the American Field Service. He and his family hosted a number of foreign students from France, Germany, Ireland and Australia.
He and his wife, Mary, have been members of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society for over twenty five years.
A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Monday, March 28, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. at St. John Church, 5 St. John Court, Cromwell. Burial will follow in the State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown where full military honors will be accorded.
Family and friends may call on Monday morning from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at the Cromwell Funeral Home, 506 Main Street, Cromwell. In lieu of flowers, donations in Bob's memory may be made to the Cromwell Volunteer Fire Department, 82 Court Street, Cromwell, CT 06416. To share memories or send condolences to the family, please visit www.doolittlefuneralservice.com.

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Ouellette, Catheline L.



Catheline L. Ouellette, 82, formerly of Colchester passed away on Tuesday, March 22, 2022. She was the beloved mother of Debra Ouellette and her fiancé Stanley Craig, Gilbert Ouellette and his fiancé Laura Whittles, and Kelly Calderoni and her husband Robert. Catheline and her late husband Gilbert lived in Colchester for 30 years where they raised their family enjoying time camping and traveling. Unfortunately, he passed away in 1994 after what felt like a short 34 years. Following her husband's death, she was blessed beyond words to of met a wonderful man named Clayton. Clayton not only treated Catheline like a princess, but also treated her children as if they were his own. They lived in Clearwater Florida for 10 years before moving back to Manchester to be with family and friends. Catheline worked at Pratt & Whitney for 27 years in the materials support area. Cathy enjoyed her job and took a lot of pride to ensure that everyone received what they required to get their job done. Catheline loved to bowl, dance, and travel... The biggest love for hers, however, was being with her Family. She adored her grandchildren, Gary Ouellette and his wife Dallas, Amber Smith and her husband Garrett, and Matthew Ouellette. Catheline also cherished her great grandchildren, Kasi and Shelby Ouellette, and Cameron and Delilah Smith. In addition to her beautiful grandchildren and great-grandchildren, she leaves behind a sister, Cecile Ratte and her husband Paul. Cathy was predeceased by her son Gary, but will be missed by Gary's wife Michele Ouellette. Catheline truly believed in her faith. It is what enabled her to enter this next phase of her life with no fear. Her family would like to extend heartfelt appreciation to the wonderful personnel at Mid State Hospital in Meriden, CT. A Visitation is going to be held on Sunday, March 27, between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM at the Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., in Colchester. A Funeral Mass will be celebrated Monday, March 28th at 11:00 AM at the St. Andrew Catholic Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial will take place Tuesday, March 29th at 10AM in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Gillette's Ln., Colchester. In lieu of flowers donations in Catheline's memory may be made to the Mid State Hospital Hospice Program. To Share a memory or express a condolence please visit: www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com. Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home, in Colchester is assisting with arrangements.

Aurora McCarthy
Funeral Home, Inc.

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Sarafopoulos, Kimberly J.



Kimberly J. Sarafopoulos, 52, of Broad Brook, has left us unexpectedly on Sunday, March 13, 2022.
She was born on August 8, 1969, in Hartford, to the late August and Carolyn (Kirwin) Phillips.
As a child, she excelled in school and played on the varsity softball team and soccer team at Bloomfield High. Kimberly spent the majority of her career working for Cigna as a Tech Specialist.
She had such a big heart for those around her, especially her friends and family. Kim loved being with animals, she loved dogs, cats, and any animal with four legs. She was blessed to welcome two grandchildren into the world, Emma Rose and Grayson Alan.
They were everything to her and brought so much joy and pride along with the biggest smile a grandparent could ever have had. Kimberly will be remembered for her big heart and sense of humor.
She is survived by her daughter, Eleni Sarafopoulos and her husband Luke Hoss of Tolland, as well her grandchildren, Emma Rose and Grayson Alan. She is also survived by her siblings, August Phillips of East Windsor, Rosemary Ksepka of Cabot VT,
Thomas Phillips of Suffield and Timothy Phillips East Windsor. She leaves behind her dog Cooper who is in the loving care of her daughter Eleni but will miss all those kisses from mom.
Kim was predeceased by her brother Kenneth Phillips.
A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date private to her family and friends. The Cremation Society of CT has care of the arrangements. For online condolences please visit www.cremationct.com

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Anop, Helen

Helen L. Anop, 95, of Kensington, passed away peacefully in her home on March 23, 2022. She was the beloved wife of the late Walter P. Anop. Helen was born in New Britain on February 16, 1927, daughter of the late Peter and Alice (Urda) Labas. She received her bachelor's degree in elementary education from CCSU, her master's degree in education and sixth year in special education from UConn. Helen taught in New Britain for 43 years at the elementary level. She was a devoted, lifelong member of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in New Britain where she established the Sunday School, sang in the church choir and was a member of the parish council. Helen's hobbies included reading, baking, cooking, and knitting. Helen's afghans will be cherished by all those fortunate to have received one.
Helen is survived by her son Peter Anop and his wife Ann Marie of Southington; daughter Alicyn Pulcini and her husband Joe of Kensington; grandchildren Alicia and Timothy Anop, and Andrew and Nicholas Pulcini; brother Peter Labas and his wife Gladys of Higganum; nieces and nephew Cheryl Labas of Newington, Robert Labas of Glastonbury, Cynthia Labas, and Amy Labas both of New Britain. Helen was a loving mother, grandmother, sister, and aunt who will live on in the hearts of her family.
Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Helen's family on Sunday, March 27 from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. at the Duksa Family Funeral Homes at Burritt Hill, 332 Burritt St., New Britain. Her Funeral Liturgy will take place on Monday, March 28 at 10:00 A.M. at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, 305 Washington St., New Britain. Burial will immediately follow in Holy Trinity Orthodox Cemetery, New Britain. In honor of Helen's dedication to teaching, donations in her memory that will be used to promote literacy, can be made to New Britain Public Schools Attn. Finance Department 2172 Main Street New Britain CT 06051. To share a condolence with her family, please visit www.duksa.net.

DUKSA

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Hunt, Jr., James T.



James T. Hunt, Jr., 57, of Windsor, beloved husband of June (Silvestri) Hunt and son of Mary Jane (Sandamena) Hunt and the late James T. Hunt, passed away at his home on Wednesday, March 23, 2022. Born in Hartford, son of the late James T. Hunt, he was raised in Windsor, where he lived for most of his adult life. James is a graduate of Windsor High School. He began his career as a security officer at Mount Sinai hospital in Hartford, where June and Jamie met and started their life together, before joining SpaceFitters in Windsor. James attended Goodwin College in East Hartford, graduating in 2017 with an Occupational Therapy Assistant degree. James was an avid fan of the New York Yankees, Formula One racing, music (jazz and the Beatles), and everything related to aviation. He loved being at his home on the Farmington River, where he grew up. Besides his father he was predeceased by his brother Timothy Hunt and leaves his wife June of 23 years; his mother Jane of Windsor; his daughter Christina Guzman and her husband Sean Kiernan of Cleveland, Ohio; his son Bryan (Guzman) Morrison and his husband Wayne of Fulton, Maryland; two grandchildren Caleb and Christopher; brother Gerald Hunt of Plainville; sister-in-law Lynda Hunt of Manchester; many nieces, nephews, and cousins, and two close friends Matt Tedone of Marlborough and William Bisson of Windsor. His family will receive friends Sunday, March 27, 2022, from 3-4 PM at the Carmon Windsor Funeral Home, 807 Bloomfield Avenue, Windsor. A Memorial Service will follow at 4 pm. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org). For directions or condolences please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com

CARMON
Community Funeral Homes

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Michael , Bailardo L

Michael L Bailardo passed away on 12/31/21 in La Quinta, Ca. Where he lived for many years. He was born in Hartford Ct the son of Michael Bailardo Sr and Josephine Fanelli. Funeral and Burial was in Coachella Ca.
Memorial donations to the American Lung association.

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Wallace, Pearl



Pearl Wallace of Wethersfield, passed away at the age of 101 on March 21, 2022 after a short illness. Pearl is survived by her son, George Wallace of Wethersfield.
Pearl and her twin sister Evelyn, were born on June 16, 1920 to Joseph and Stasia Wanic in Hartford, CT. Her family moved to Wethersfield in 1937, and Pearl graduated from Wethersfield High School in 1938. After working for a year to gain tuition money, Pearl enrolled in the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing graduating in 1942. Pearl was a dedicated Registered Nurse working at Hartford Hospital, the Newington Veteran's Hospital and Pratt and Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford. It was at Pratt and Whitney where she met her husband, George E. Wallace, a machinist who eventually rose to be a Divisional Superintendent at the North Haven plant.
She and George were married in 1949 and began their lives together in Cromwell. They had two adoring children, George and Sandra, and then moved back to Wethersfield in 1956 where they raised the happiest family imaginable.
Pearl resumed working at Hartford Hospital through the sixties, finishing her career in 1972. She enjoyed gardening, embroidery, and visiting the family cottage on Cape Cod. Pearl and George travelled extensively throughout the Pacific, Mexico and the Caribbean sharing countless wonderful times together.
Pearl enjoyed every day and particularly loved seeing the flowers come up in springtime. If you knew her, please plant a perennial in your garden, and smile and think of her when it blooms in the spring.
Funeral services for Pearl will be private. The D'Esopo Funeral Chapel of Wethersfield is assisting the family with the arrangements. For online expressions of sympathy to the family, please visit www.desopofuneralchapel.com.

D'Esopo
Funeral Chapel

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OBITUARIES

Lynch, Edward M



Edward Michael Lynch passed away January 25,2022 at the age of 73 after valiant fights against multiple illnesses, but his body could not keep up with his Marine fighting spirit.
Ed was born in Boston, MA to Lawrence and Marie (Boudreau) Lynch. He volunteered for duty in the US Marine Corps in Vietnam and earned the Combat Action Ribbon and other awards for good conduct.
He was an aerospace engineer at Hamilton Standard/Sundstrand for over 36 years, worked as a contracted employee after his official retirement, working on both civil and defense contracts.
Ed was an active participant in numerous hobbies and clubs. He enjoyed bowling, gardening, golf, his Harley and was an avid outdoorsman.
His greatest love was his family. He was dad to a large, blended family of six kids and "Pop" to six grandchildren. Though some were acquired through marriage, he truly cared for them all as his own.
He and his wife, Laurie, moved to Tucson AZ to escape the harsh New England winter.
Edward was predeceased by his brother Lawrence Lynch III, his sister Marcelyin "Marcie" Mikeska and grandson Remy O'Toole. He will also join his beloved dog Buddy and his favorite rabbit Diego.
He leaves behind his wife Laurie O'Toole. Children: Pam Zelenka (David), Julie Dickson (Brian), Jennifer Lynch, Ginger O'Toole, Kevin O'Toole (Courtney), Ian O'Toole (fiancé Danielle). Grandchildren: Stephanie & Chelsea Dickson, Dylan Zelenka, Mason Spence, Samantha Edwards-O'Toole, and Elliott Olson. Also, a special friend Lori Fontana, who Ed also loved like a daughter.
A memorial service to be held at later date in May/June 2022.
Semper Fidelis. You will be truly missed.
Donations can be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital or the local Humane Society.

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Hall, Ethel B (Walton)



Ethel B. Hall, 99, wife of the late Leonard Hall of Hartford, CT, entered into eternal rest on Saturday March 12th, 2022. She was born on February 2nd, 1923 in Richland, GA, to the late Amos & Lucile (Covington) Walton. Funeral services will be held at 9am at the Mt. Calvary Baptist Church 2 F.D. Oates Ave. Hartford, CT

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Burhans, Jr., William H.



William H. Burhans, Jr., of River Ridge at Avon, passed away peacefully on Monday March 21, 2022, from complications of Dementia. "Billy" was 83 and lived his entire life in East Granby since his birth on October 15, 1938, at Hartford Hospital. He attended East Granby Elementary Schools and graduated from Simsbury High School 1956. He was active in the Boy Scouts of America during that period and also enjoyed working on cars, gardening and sports. In 1958, much to the surprise of his parents (William H. Burhans, Sr. and Beatrice Viets Burhans) Billy enlisted in the "USMC" serving in the Helicopter division until receiving his honorable discharge in 1962. After returning home he earned his "A&P" certificate (Airframe & Power Plant) and started a career in Aircraft Overhaul and Repair at various facilities in CT. and N.Y. State. He is survived by his brother Peter and wife Judy, nephew David and wife Diane and their children Peter and Jennifer, nephew Mark and his friend Kristen Cianci and Marks son, Matthew. Billy was a member of the East Granby Congregational Church. The family wishes to extend its sincere thanks to the staff of River Ridge at Avon for their attentive and loving care of Billy during his four plus years at their assisted living facility. Funeral Services will be private and at the convenience of the family. Hayes-Huling & Carmon Funeral Home of Granby has care of the arrangements. For condolences, please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com.

CARMON
Community Funeral Homes

Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Stein, Melvin D

Melvin Stein, 91, of South Windsor, CT, passed away peacefully, at home, on Tuesday, March 22. Mel was born August 16th, 1930, in Tuscaloosa, AL. He graduated from the University of Alabama, where he played football, and met his wife Joan Sherrow Stein (deceased). He went on to attend veterinary school at Auburn University. In recent years he sported Alabama swag, but if Auburn had a good chance at a bowl game he happily changed his colors. He started his veterinary practice in the early 60's in South Windsor. Although he attempted to retire when he and Joan moved to Florida in the 90's, he continued to practice veterinary medicine, finally retiring when he was 87 years old. He loved his family, his work, telling a story, good barbecue, the horses, gluing anything, his daily amazon deliveries (yes plural), and The Crimson Tide (not necessarily in that order). He is survived by his son Steve Stein (Ann), Sheryl Stein (Robert Mervis), Jay Stein (Valeri French), Teri Beckoff (Jay); Grandchildren David Stein; Abbie and Matthew Beckoff; Daniel (Callie) and Jordan Mervis. A small graveside service was held on Thursday. A celebration of life will take place at a later time (TBD). Donations can be made to the Alzheimer's Foundation, which became a passion of Mel's after the loss of his beloved wife.

Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Sousa, Maria (Freitas)



Maria (Freitas) Sousa, 90, of West Hartford, beloved wife of the late Joao Sousa, passed on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at Hartford Hospital. Born in Santa Maria, Acorez, Portugal, she had lived in the Hartford area since 1977. Prior to her retirement she was employed at Data Mail and was a communicant of Our Lady of Fatima Church, Hartford.
She is survived by three daughters, Beatriz Melo and her husband Manuel of Newington, Maria Santos of Canada and Arminda Tome and her husband Angelo of West Hartford; two brothers, Bernadinho Freitas of Massachusetts, and Antonio Freitas of California; a sister, Beatriz Reis of Canada; six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.
Besides her husband, Maria was predeceased by a son, Antonio Sousa, a son-in-law Jose Santos and a granddaughter, Maria Da Luz Tome.
Calling hours will be Saturday, March 26, 2022 from 9:30am-10:30am at the Sheehan Hilborn Breen Funeral Home, 1084 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11am at Our Lady of Fatima Church, 50 Kane Street, Hartford. Entombment will follow in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford. Online condolences may be made at www.SheehanHilbronBreen.com

Sheehan Hilborn Breen
FUNERAL HOME

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IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory Of
MAUREEN IVERS

It's been a year since you passed and your presence is always missed. We will forever hold your spirit in our hearts and minds as we remember all the wonderful times we shared together. Thinking of you always.
Love- Wally, Kate, Kristine, Chris, Paulo, Avery, Riley, Holden, PJ & Tyler











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CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT

Connecticut's COVID-19 numbers up

Contagious variant BA.2 has health officials on alert

By Alex Putterman
Hartford Courant

Connecticut has seen a slight rise in its COVID-19 positivity rate and a flattening of its case count over the past week, state numbers show, in what experts say could be the early signs of a new coronavirus spike.

In recent weeks, infectious disease experts have grown increasingly worried about BA.2, an omicron subvariant believed to be more contagious than previous COVID-19 strains. In places where BA.2 has spread widely, cases have tended to increase accordingly.

Nathan Grubaugh, a Yale School of Public Health researcher, reported Thursday that BA.2 already accounts for more than 80% of COVID-19 cases in the southern part of Connecticut, which could explain worrying trends in wastewater surveillance at sites in New Haven and Fairfield.

Cases have already risen across much of Europe as a result of BA.2, and experts say the United States might not be far behind.

"Historically we follow behind Europe by about two to three weeks, and we've seen case numbers go up quite substantially in Europe," said Dr. Scott Roberts, associate medical director for infection prevention at Yale New Haven Hospital. "What I would predict is that we will start to see rises quite shortly now that we're seeing BA.2 in higher proportions."

While a full-on uptick has not yet materialized in Connecticut, the state's COVID-19 positivity rate has begun to increase, while cases and hospitalizations have leveled off. Additionally, the state reported 67 coronavirus-linked deaths this week, up slightly from the week before.

Roberts noted that BA.2 has arrived right as COVID-19 precautions have generally disappeared.

Turn to COVID-19, Page 2



Wethersfield resident Sean Fuss walks his dog past a barn on a portion of the 32-acre farm that Wethersfield bought for more than $2 million in 2018.
MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT

Community asset or taxpayers' burden?

Four years after Wethersfield bought Kycia Farm, debate resumes

By Don Stacom
Hartford Courant

The 32-acre farm that was approved for purchase by Wethersfield voters for more than $2 million in a 2018 referendum should become a nonprofit working farm, recreation fields and walking trails, a study panel told the town council this week.

But if that's going to be at public expense, at least one town official wants Wethersfield to consider selling the Kycia Farm property for development instead.

"We're paying $200,000 each year for 20 years," Deputy Mayor Tom Mazzarella told the town council this week. "If you put 20 houses on there for $350,000 a house, you're talking about several hundred thousand (yearly) in tax revenue."

"We're paying $200,000 each year for 20 years. If you put 20 houses on there for $350,000 a house, you're talking about several hundred thousand (yearly) in tax revenue."

— Wethersfield Deputy Mayor Tom Mazzarwlla

The volunteer panel that's been studying how Wethersfield should use the property recommends creating a working farm on part of the acreage. The town could create a community-based nonprofit to manage it and supervise day-to-day farm operations along with any recreational fields and trails on the remaining land, according to the committee.

It cited similar operations that work in other communities, including the Massaro Community Farm in Woodbridge and the Holcomb Farm in Granby. Massaro bills itself as a certified organic, nonprofit farm on a 57-acre tract; Woodbridge has owned the land since 2007. Holcomb is a non-profit working farm; Granby has owned the land for 32 years, and the volunteer Friends of Holcomb Farm group runs it.

Turn to Farm, Page 2

Evictions could hit highest in years

As protections run out, 'we're about to see a lot of people in need'

By Ginny Monk
CT Mirror

As funding for the state's rental assistance program dwindles, the number of eviction filings in Connecticut is on track to hit its highest level since at least 2017.

As of March 16, there were 1,275 evictions filed in March, the highest number in a month since the first COVID-19 case hit Connecticut. If filings continue at that rate per day, they'll be just over 2,400 by the end of the month, the highest of any month since at least 2017, data from the Connecticut Fair Housing Center shows.

The center's data on filings goes back to January 2017.

As of Monday, all of the $400.6 million in federal money that Connecticut had for rental assistance had either been given out or was labeled as "payments in progress" on the UniteCT dashboard. Aaron Turner, a Department of Housing spokesman, said program staff are still reviewing applications.

"We know that we are about to jump off the cliff, and we're about to see a lot of people in need," said Carla Miklos, executive director of Operation Hope of Fairfield.

The nonprofit previously would get about five or six calls per week from people facing eviction and seeking rent assistance. Now, they're getting three to five per day, Miklos said.

Two key events occurred in mid-February that housing experts say have led to more evictions: the state's temporary rental assistance program stopped taking new applications, and a gubernatorial order expired that gave tenants more time to leave the apartment or pay rent.

UniteCT, the state's rental assistance program, had about $400.6 million set aside for rental and utility assistance payments. Tenants who were financially impacted by the pandemic and earn up to

Turn to Evictions, Page 2

Connecticut retail, warehouses see marked comeback in hiring

State's unemployment rate drops to 4.9%, lowest in nearly 2 years

By Stephen Singer
Hartford Courant

Hiring in retail and in Connecticut's broad web of warehouses powered a surge in employment in February, the state Department of Labor reported Thursday.

Employers added a robust 6,300 jobs, pushing the unemployment rate down by .04%, to 4.9%, the first time it's been below 5% since March 2020. The U.S. jobless rate in February was 3.8%.

Businesses added 2,400 retail jobs and another 1,800 in wholesale. Health care and social assistance added 2,500 jobs in February.

Economists also revised what had been a loss of 700 jobs in January to a gain of 1,300, leading to a small increase of 600 jobs.



Retail jobs are staging a comeback, according to a February report by the Connecticut Department of Labor. Pictured here is Morneault's Stackpole Moore Tryon clothiers in Hartford. COURANT FILE PHOTO

Connecticut has recovered 80.5% of the 289,400 jobs lost in the March and April 2020 COVID lockdown.

"There is no doubt that the omicron variant slowed the state's economy in December and January," Labor Commissioner Danté Bartolomeo said. "Now that omicron has subsided, we are once again seeing strong numbers across multiple economic indicators. The unemployment rate is below 5%, jobs are being added and unemployment claims are down."

Turn to Hiring, Page 3

Paraeducators seeking 'dignity and respect'

Profession pushes bill that would improve working conditions

By Seamus McAvoy
Hartford Courant

Connecticut paraeducators are urging lawmakers to adopt a handful of recommendations that would improve professional-development opportunities and bring "dignity and respect" to a profession they say is often overlooked.

The bill now in front of the legislature's education committee, House Bill 5321, would adopt three of the eight recommendations made by the Connecticut School Paraeducator Advisory Council, which the legislature asked last year to explore working conditions for paraeducators within the state.

Cindy Giammatti, a paraeducator with in East Haven Public Schools, said the bill "is a great step in the right direction for much-needed improvements for work life, the whole climate and culture for paraeducators."

"What's most important that this bill addresses is the treatment, dignity and respect that paraeducators deserve that in many cases is not evident," Giammatti told lawmakers during a public hearing Monday.

Paraeducators typically work as teacher assistants in the lower grades, most often with either a single student or small group.

There were about 14,450 paraprofessionals or non-certified instructional staff in Connecticut in 2014, two-thirds of whom worked in special education, according to a legislative review.

Paraeducators may help run classroom-wide activities, but also provide individualized assistance or translation services to students with differing needs. But compensation, they argue, is rarely commensurate with the wide range of duties they serve.

"We're the substitutes, we're the

Turn to Bill, Page 2

Officer shot person during welfare check, police say

By Christine Dempsey
Hartford Courant

An officer who went to check on someone's well-being in Torrington Wednesday ended up shooting a person, police said. The shooting happened about 4:40 p.m. on Tioga Street, where the officer was sent for what police called a well-being check.

"Upon arrival, an officer was confronted by a male party and was forced to fire his service weapon," Det. Kevin L. Tieman said.

The wounded person was taken to Charlotte Hungerford Hospital and later airlifted to Hartford Hospital to be treated for multiple gunshot wounds. His age and condition weren't clear Thursday morning.

While detectives with the state police gathered evidence at the scene, the newly formed Office of the Inspector General is investigating the shooting, said Brian Foley, assistant to the commissioner of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. In a brief written statement, the inspector general, Robert J. Devlin Jr., said, "At this time, the Office of Inspector General is investigating the officer-involved shooting incident that occurred yesterday in Torrington. Further information concerning the incident will be provided in the near future."

Christine Dempsey may be reached at cdempsey@courant.com.

Driver dead after wrong-way crash on I-84 in Plainville

By Christine Dempsey
Hartford Courant

A wrong-way driver died when his Ford Focus slammed into an oncoming car on I-84 in Plainville on Wednesday , state police said.

Walter Turner, 43, of Spruce Brook Drive in Berlin was pronounced dead at the scene; the other driver, Vanessa Gonzalez, 27, was taken to the Hospital of Central Connecticut's New Britain General Campus to be treated for what appeared to be minor injuries, troopers said. Neither driver had any passengers.

According to the state police, the crash happened shortly after 2 p.m. when Turner was driving his 2006 Ford Focus ZX5 east in the westbound lanes. He hit Gonzalez's 2021 Toyota Rav4 LE, which was headed west in the left lane, head on.

Anyone who saw the crash or has dashcam video of it is asked to contact Trooper Michael Dean at the Troop H barracks, 860-534-1098 or at michael.dean@ct.gov.

Christine Dempsey can be reached at cdempsey@courant.com.

Old Saybrook officer on leave after arrest in alleged pub fight

By Christine Dempsey
Hartford Courant

An Old Saybrook officer who state police allege shoved a relative and choked another man in an Essex bar is on administrative leave.

Tyler Schulz, 29, turned himself in March 3 and was charged with breach of peace. He was released on a promise to appear in Superior Court in Middletown for his arraignment the next day and is scheduled to return to court April 22, court records show.

He is on paid leave from the department pending an internal affairs investigation, Chief Michael A. Spera said Thursday.

According to an arrest warrant affidavit, the incident happened about 12:15 a.m. on Feb. 27 at the Scotch Plains Tavern. Schulz allegedly walked up to his relative, got in his face and shoved him backward, the warrant affidavit said.

He then allegedly put his hands around the neck of another man who jumped in between the two to separate them, the affidavit said, leaving red marks.

Neither man was seriously injured, and both, as well as the tavern manager, declined to press charges, the warrant said.

The arrest was made because it was considered an act of domestic violence, according to police. The incident stemmed from an alleged ongoing problem between the two men, according to the warrant.

Schulz's lawyer, Rob Britt, declined to comment on the charge Thursday.

"Because the matter's pending, I'll reserve my comments for the courtroom," Britt said.

Christine Dempsey may be reached at cdempsey@courant.com.

Evictions

from Page 1

80% of area median income could get up to $15,000 in assistance.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act and American Rescue Plan Act funded the federal Emergency Rental Assistance program. The U.S. Department of the Treasury distributed that money to states and localities for rent assistance.

Many states were slow to dole out funds, and some have had their funds partially reallocated to states that spent the money more quickly. Although Connecticut applied for more money, the Department of Housing hasn't received any more.

Connecticut's program stopped taking applications on Feb. 15 as funding began to run low. Pending applications need to be completed by the end of the month to be considered, according to the UniteCT webpage.

"We've seen a huge increase in phone calls. The vast majority of them are people facing eviction," said Pamela Heller, a staff attorney with the Connecticut Fair Housing Center. "Some still have UniteCT applications pending, and they're desperately hoping it will come through."

Applications for tenants facing evictions are prioritized in the UniteCT program, Turner said. The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that about 20 states will run out of funding and close their programs by the end of the year, said Sarah Gallagher, senior project director for the End Rental Arrears to Stop Evictions project at the coalition.

"It wasn't enough to meet the need for anybody," Gallagher said, of the localities that received funding. "There are many renters, even in Connecticut, where people didn't receive the money who needed it."

The program was never meant to be permanent, but the coalition is encouraging states to maintain their staffing and web portals in the hopes a more permanent fund can be established. Some localities are using additional American Rescue Plan Act money to do that, Gallagher said.

The UniteCT program cut down on some of its temporary staffing for the program after it hit its peak in the fall.

One of Gov. Ned Lamont's emergency orders also gave tenants 30 days to either fix the problem that caused the eviction — such as not paying the rent — or vacate a property once they got what's called a notice to quit from their landlord.

Since the order expired in February, tenants again have three days to pay rent or leave after receiving an eviction order, Heller said.

"What we're seeing here is a return to a pre-pandemic eviction crisis," said Cecil Thomas, a staff attorney with Greater Hartford Legal Aid.

Thomas said tenants with pending UniteCT applications can request a 30-day stay in court while they wait for money.

Over the past year, Connecticut's 2-1-1 phone line through the United Way has received just over 319,000 calls regarding housing and shelter needs. About 20% of those were about rental assistance, according to a data dashboard.

Miklos, of Operation Hope, said the number of calls for rent assistance has been going up for a while.

"I anticipate that there's going to be a lot of people looking for help, and I'm fearful that over the past so many months that, if they haven't been able to pay that, the amounts they owe are going to be prohibitive," Miklos said.

It may also be difficult for people who lose their homes to find new housing in a market where demand is higher than supply and rent prices are rising, Miklos said.

"It's just a recipe for disaster," she said.

To prepare for an influx of people facing housing instability, they've dedicated a staffer to help with rental assistance and applied for more funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Food and Shelter Program.

Previously, the group was only able to give out one month's rent, but now they'll be able to dole out two or three, Miklos said.

The state's Homeless Prevention Program is also available for residents who may be at risk of becoming homeless if they're evicted. Anyone going through an eviction and facing homelessness can call 2-1-1 for help, Turner said.

And Connecticut's newly launched Right to Counsel program provides legal assistance during eviction proceedings for veterans or people who live in 14 ZIP codes and earn up to 80% of area median income.



A drive-thru COVID-19 testing site in Hagerstown, Maryland, on Feb. 18. As the omicron coronavirus surge subsides, researchers are keeping an eye on a highly transmissible subvariant known as BA.2 that doesn't appear to have the capacity to drive a massive new wave of infections, but could potentially slow the current decline of cases and make treatments more difficult. **FILE**

COVID-19

from Page 1

While he doesn't expect a surge nearly as bad as Connecticut experienced this winter, he sees an uptick in cases as inevitable.

"All of this is occurring at a time when all of our public-health restrictions are really loosening," Roberts said. "People, rightfully so, want to get back to some sense of normalcy, but I worry that in the face of a new subvariant that's more transmissible than the omicron variant, with unmasking, with having everything get back to normal, that has the risk of being a very dangerous combination that would lead to an increase in cases over the next few weeks."

Gov. Ned Lamont acknowledged the new subvariant in a tweet Thursday, urging Connecticut residents to order rapid COVID-19 tests at covidtests.gov.

"With the BA.2 Covid variant spreading across the nation, Connecticut is ready," Lamont wrote. "Families have layers of protection available — vaccines + boosters, quality masks, and at-home rapid testing."

Cases and positivity rate

Connecticut has reported 2,235 cases out of 79,433 tests over the past week, for a positivity rate of 2.81% — up from 2.53% the seven days prior, though down dramatically from the height of the state's omicron outbreak.

Connecticut's average of 319 daily cases over the past week is about even with the previous week and down from more than 10,000 at one point last month. Unvaccinated residents have been about three times as likely to test positive in recent weeks as vaccinated residents, according to state numbers.

As of Thursday, only eight of Connecticut's 169 municipalities remain in the state's "red alert" category, meaning they have averaged at least 15 daily cases per 100,000 residents over the past week.

Currently, Westport is the Connecticut municipality with the highest rate of new COVID-19 cases, followed by North Haven, Middletown and New Haven.

Under the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's new guidance, all eight Connecticut counties are recording "low" levels of COVID-19 transmission, meaning that masking is not considered necessary there.

Hospitalizations

As of Thursday, Connecticut had 100 patients hospitalized with COVID-19, up slightly from late last week.

Many of those patients, officials say, are "incidental" cases, meaning they were admitted for non-coronavirus reasons before testing positive upon arrival.

According to the state, 44% of people hospitalized with COVID-19 are unvaccinated — a figure likely skewed by incidental cases. Hospital officials say the rate is significantly higher when considering only patients with severe symptoms.

Deaths

Connecticut reported 67 deaths over the past week on Thursday, bringing its total during the pandemic to 10,744.

That total represented a slight uptick from the 62 deaths the state announced the week prior and the fewest in a seven-day span since before Christmas. COVID-19 deaths, which typically tend to lag other metrics by several weeks, have dipped in recent months but remain more common than they were most of last year.

The United States has now recorded 975,271 COVID-19 deaths, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University.

Vaccinations

As of Thursday, 94.5% of all Connecticut residents and 95% of those 5 and older had received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, while 78.3% of all residents and 82.5% of those 5 and older were fully vaccinated, according to the CDC.

Additionally, 52.8% of fully vaccinated residents 12 or older have received a booster dose.

The CDC warns that booster shots are sometimes misclassified as first doses, likely inflating the reported number of first-dose coverage and understating the true number of people who have received boosters.

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Bill

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security guards, we're the cleaners, we're everything, and yet we don't get the same treatment reflected in our salaries and benefits," said Hyclis Williams, president of AFSCME Local 3429, a labor union representing paraprofessionals in the New Haven Public Schools.

In 2021, state lawmakers asked the Connecticut School Paraeducator Advisory Council to conduct a survey and draft recommendations to address building frustration with working conditions, wages and career-advancement opportunities.

Shellye Davis, council co-chair and executive vice president of Connecticut AFL-CIO, told lawmakers that the survey of 3,401 responses confirmed a widespread sentiment "that paraeducators are often an afterthought, and despite the important work they do, their efforts in the classroom are rarely prioritized or maximized."

With staffing shortages across the board in education, from full-time teachers to substitutes, Davis said paraeducators are often left plugging the gaps to make sure students receive adequate resources and attention.

Nearly 70% of survey respondents said they have been assigned to cover a teacher's absence as a substitute teacher, with 32.6% saying they've covered for a teacher's absence for an entire day.

And while the strong majority of paraeducators are considered full-time employees, more than 60% said the retirement benefits they earn would not allow them to maintain a comfortable lifestyle.

About 65% of paraeducators have been in the profession for at least five years, and 18% have been a paraeducator for more than 20 years, according to the survey.

Giammatti has been a paraeducator for nearly 30 years and now works with special education middle school students.

"Not only do [the students] depend on me for academic support, they rely on me for emotional support," said Giammatti. "I develop long-lasting connections and relationships with all of them."

Despite the vital role paraeducators play in the school ecosystem, Giammatti said, she often feels as though she's viewed as a "glorified babysitter."

The bill now in front of lawmakers would create a professional-development plan and a working group to study a paraeducator certification program.

The bill would also allow paraeducators to access individualized education programs, which describe targeted goals for special-education students, and attend planning and placement team meetings, which is when parents and education staff meet after a student is referred to special education.

"We are professionals who, I believe, should be included in this process," Giammatti said. "With the training, we would be even better."

Davis said these "common sense" changes are a "step in the right direction," but hopes the remaining five recommendations stay on the table.

Those recommendations include a statewide living wage provision for paraeducators, and the inclusion of paraeducators in the state's pension plan.

"Right now, we're at a point where if something doesn't happen soon, this whole education thing is not doing what it should be doing to get the kids the things they need, and that's one of the biggest concerns," Davis said.

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Farm

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In Wethersfield, the Kycia Farm Committee has held numerous public meetings to determine what to do with the farmland at the corner of Highland Street and Collier Road, adjacent to the Highcrest elementary school.

It told the council that a public survey found widespread support for restoring some of the land to farming; the panel recommend the town council spend $3,000 to hire a surveyor to determine just how many acres would be suitable for agriculture.

Gena Golas, a committee member, told the council this week that it should incorporate a nonprofit to manage the farm. Membership could be open to any residents, and its executive director would also manage the farm, she said.

The top recommendations from the survey were to operate an organic farm, offer year-round educational programs and community events, renovate the historic barn there, and provide trails and open space, she said.

Mazzarella said there was no indication that would help taxpayers cover the cost of buying the land.

"I would suggest if we're going to turn over the property to a nonprofit, they lease it for somewhere in the neighborhood of $200,000 a year," Wethersfield's cost for debt service on the 2018 acquisition. "There have been proposals to put something on that property so it brings revenue to the community."

Mazzarella complained the committee didn't study revenue-producing uses.

"I don't believe you surveyed the town adequately to see what the true intent of the residents was," he said. "You haven't done any financial analysis of the problem. Quite frankly, I don't agree with anything that was said."

Committee Chairman Cindy Greenblatt said thousands of residents support farming on the land and that families now have to go to Glastonbury or farther to see a working farm.

"They bring a sense to the community of who we are and what we value," she said, and results of the community survey proved that, she said. "People want to see an opportunity for their children and their families and to utilize this property — that's what we saw."

"I think you saw what you wanted to see," Mazzarella shot back.

Greenblatt countered that the survey was conducted by the University of Hartford's Barney School of Business.

"The results were never in our possession. We did not influence them or have access to them," she said.

Council member Daniel O'Connor suggested that issue has already been settled.

"Whether you agreed with the referendum or not, the town spoke and said 'This is what we want to do,' " O'Connor said.

The council postponed any action until next month, when Interim Town Manager Bonnie Therrien will speak about whether the town could legally sell the land after the 2018 referendum. She will report on the town bond attorney's research into the provisions of the referendum and bond sale.

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DPH: More than 1,000 kids poisoned by lead in '20

Higher rates remain among Black and Hispanic children

Connecticut Health I-Team

More than 1,000 Connecticut children under age 6 were reported poisoned by lead in 2020, according to a report released this week by the state Department of Public Health.

Of the children tested that year, 649 were new cases.

As has been the case for many years, nearly half of the 1,024 lead-poisoned children lived in the state's cities. New Haven had the highest number of lead-poisoned children, with 171, followed by Bridgeport, 148; Waterbury, 81; Hartford, 71; and Meriden, 35. These five cities had 49% of all lead-poisoned children in Connecticut in 2020.

Following suit, health disparities also continued. Black and Hispanic children continued to have higher rates of lead poisoning than non-Hispanic white children. Non-Hispanic Black children were 2.6 times more likely to be poisoned than white children, according to a detailed report on the 2020 lead poisoning numbers on the state's Open Data website.

DPH Commissioner Manisha Juthani, M.D., said, "Protecting the youngest residents of our state from lead poisoning is a priority for DPH. And even though the numbers show that we are heading in the right direction, our work — including linking families to vital resources and building awareness in our inner cities — is far from done."

But these latest numbers are based on a calculation that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the state have used since 2012. That calculation defines lead poisoning as 5 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood in a child's body.

In October, the CDC lowered its definition of lead poisoning to 3.5 micrograms per deciliter.

If the state had used the CDC's new measurement, or "reference value," the number of Connecticut children considered lead poisoned would triple, to 3,000.

Even without the CDC's adjustment, the pandemic complicates how to compare the numbers released to those from earlier years.

The DPH says in its report that "there was a sharp decline in screening" in April 2020, a month after the country started shutting down. A total of 61,700 children in Connecticut received lead blood tests in 2020, compared with 72,000 in 2019 and 73,000 in 2018, according to DPH reports. In addition, less than 60% of the state's children under 3 years old were tested twice, as required by state law.

Although lead poisoning is notoriously linked to the water crisis in Flint, Mich., in 2014, lead poisoning in the Northeast and in other older parts of the country is usually the result of deteriorating interior and exterior house paint.

For close to a century, before the federal government finally banned its use in 1978, lead was added to paint to increase its durability. Although walls may be painted over, chips from the degrading paint can be leaded. Of particular concern is leaded paint dust, created as paint breaks down and is left behind when doors and windows of older homes are opened and shut.

Babies and toddlers are particularly vulnerable to deteriorating paint because they are close to the ground and their breathing rates are higher than that of adults. And, as any parent knows, young children typically explore their new worlds, quite literally, through hand-to-mouth activities, turning a floor with leaded paint chips and leaded dust into dangerous terrain.

Exposure to the heavy metal, particularly during these early years when children's brains are developing, can cause permanent cognitive damage, including an irreversible loss in IQ points. The toxin is also linked to speech and developmental delays, hearing loss and hyperactivity.

In addition to the 2020 numbers, DPH this week issued the numbers of lead-poisoned children in 2019 — 1,188; and 2018 — 1,333.

To view the 2018 and 2019 childhood lead reports go here.

This story was reported under a partnership with the Connecticut Health I-Team (c-hit.org), a nonprofit news organization dedicated to health reporting.



In 2016, Bobby Kent pushes a baited lobster pot into the waters of Long Island Sound off Groton. **ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP**

Abandoned lobster traps to be extracted

'Ghost fishery' in Long Island Sound plagues marine life

By Susan Haigh
Associated Press

Two decades after Connecticut's lobster industry collapsed, federal funding has been approved to begin removing some of the hundreds of thousands of derelict lobster traps left on the floor of the Long Island Sound, a "ghost fishery" that continues to trap and kill marine life to this day.

The $569,000 included in the new federal budget bill will finance a coalition, led by The Maritime Aquarium of Norwalk, which will oversee retrieval of the traps. The goal is to eventually hire local charter fishing vessels and fishermen to collect an initial 3,000 traps over two years, ultimately getting rid of abandoned marine debris that has upset the Sound's food chain and become a source of pollution in the waters.

"These are not traps that are still being actively retrieved by fishermen. And yet, what we have learned over years of research, is that they are still traps that are actively catching different marine life," said Jason Patlis, the aquarium's president and CEO. "There's not much lobster to be had, but there are crustaceans that are finding their way into the traps. There's finfish that find their way into the traps."

The effort to remove the old lobster traps in Connecticut waters is similar to the one taken in the New York waters of Long Island Sound. Since 2011, the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County has removed 19,000 abandoned traps — about 91% were still functioning. About a third of those were found to have live crabs, fish and lobsters, including pregnant females, often attracted by other animals that had died inside the trap, said Scott Curatolo-Wagemann, senior educator at the agency.

A similar effort to remove 9% of the "ghost" lobster traps from Chesapeake Bay led to an increase in fisheries by thousands of metric tons, said David Hudson, a researcher in residence at Norwalk aquarium. He predicted that removing the old traps will help the populations of various fish species including tautog, rock crabs, whelk, cunner and sea bass, as well as the remaining lobsters.

It's been estimated that about one million lobster traps have been left behind in Long Island Sound, either lost accidentally over the years or abandoned after the region's $12 million lobster industry crashed in 1999, fueled in part by a massive die-off of lobsters, Curatolo-Wagemann said.

The Cornell cooperative extension service has since worked with the commercial fishing industry to track down and pull up the old traps — an approach Connecticut now plans to follow as well.

"The guys who had stayed in it, most of the guys we're working with are multi-generational fishermen. A lot of them in their 70s. And they were full-time lobstermen at one point," Curatolo-Wagemann said. "They kind of knew over the years where different guys had fished their traps. So their knowledge has been invaluable to us being able to locate these things."

In Connecticut, the aquarium in Norwalk will be working with Save the Sound, the Long Island Soundkeeper, Project Oceanology in Groton and the New York cooperative extension service to start up the new removal operation for Connecticut's portion of the 1,320-square-mile (3,420-square-kilometer) estuary. Funds from the federal budget bill, secured by the state's congressional delegation, will be used to operate vessels, pay lobstermen to remove old traps and other expenses.

Bill Lucy, the Long Island Soundkeeper and a former commercial harvester, said he's ready to coordinate the lobster trap removal trips, research activities and workshops with local lobstermen, as well as help return tagged derelict lobster traps back to their original owners. Those traps with no markings or that go unclaimed will be recycled.

"Save the Sound is looking forward to working with the fishing fleet to start clearing these lost traps and reducing this hazard to marine life," he said in a statement.

Old lobster traps will be removed from every coastal community along the Connecticut shoreline. Sixty outings are planned over the next two years, likely beginning sometime this fall. Copps Island Oysters in Norwalk and Indian River Shellfish in the Madison and Clinton area have already agreed to retrieve the old lobster traps. Others in the industry will have the opportunity to apply.

Premature newborn abandoned on hood of car

By Taylor Hartz
Hartford Courant

HARTFORD — A man abandoned a newborn baby on the hood of a stranger's parked car Wednesday afternoon in Mansfield, police said.

A woman called 911 about 4:17 p.m. Wednesday to report that a man she didn't know walked up to her vehicle, which was parked on Pleasant Valley Road, and left a baby on the hood, according to Connecticut State Police.

The baby, a premature newborn, was between 28 and 30 weeks old, according to police.

The baby was taken to a hospital for treatment and was listed in stable condition as of Thursday afternoon, police said.

The man who abandoned the baby drove away in a dark-colored vehicle. He was described as a heavy-set Hispanic man with short, black hair, wearing a black, long sleeved T-shirt and black jogger-style pants, police said.

The Eastern District Major Crime Squad was investigating the incident. Anyone with information was asked to contact Connecticut State Police Trooper Matthew Hogan at 860-896-3236 or matthew.hogan@ct.gov.

Jones again fails to show at Sandy Hook suit deposition

By Dave Collins
Associated Press

Infowars host Alex Jones on Thursday defied a Connecticut judge's order to show up for a deposition in a case brought by relatives of victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting who sued Jones for calling the massacre a hoax, according to the families' lawyer.



Jones

It was the second straight day that Jones did not appear for the deposition in Austin, Texas, which was scheduled to be held Wednesday and Thursday. It wasn't immediately clear what penalties he may face.

Jones' lawyer, Norman Pattis, said Thursday that Jones was following his doctor's guidance to not attend court proceedings because of undisclosed medical conditions.

"Mr. Jones was given conflicting imperatives: his physician told him to stay home; a judge told him to go to a deposition," Pattis wrote in an email to Associated Press. "He is following his doctor's advice. I suspect most people sensible would do as Mr. Jones has done."

But Connecticut Judge Barbara Bellis on Wednesday denied Pattis' request to delay the proceeding and ordered Jones to appear Thursday. Bellis wrote in a ruling that letters from Jones' doctors indicate his medical conditions aren't serious enough to prevent him from attending the deposition. Bellis noted Jones wasn't hospitalized and appeared on his web show earlier this week.

Bellis warned Jones that he would be in contempt of her order if he failed to show Thursday, and said the families' lawyers could request sanctions against him and try to subpoena him in Texas.

Bellis found Jones liable for damages in November. A trial on how much he should pay the families is set to begin in August.

Twenty first graders and six educators were killed in the 2012 shooting. The families of eight of the victims and an FBI agent who responded to school sued Jones, Infowars and others, saying they have been subjected to harassment and death threats from Jones' followers because of the hoax conspiracy. Jones has since said he believes the shooting did occur.

Christopher Mattei, a lawyer for the Sandy Hook families, said Jones did not show up for the deposition Thursday. He did not immediately say what the families' next legal steps were. He previously said the families would seek a subpoena to compel Jones to appear at his deposition.

Also Wednesday, Bellis denied the families' request to have Jones arrested and brought to the deposition if he failed to appear Thursday.

Pattis filed new court documents Wednesday that included letters from two doctors who said they advised Jones not to attend the deposition because of his medical conditions. Pattis wrote Jones' doctor was so alarmed by his observations of Jones on Monday that he advised him to go to an emergency room or call 911. Jones refused and his doctor advised him to stay home, Pattis said.

On Tuesday, however, Jones broadcasted his daily website show at the Infowars studio in Austin, his lawyers said. He did not appear in person on the show Wednesday, but he provided commentary by phone including pre-recorded segments for portions of the program.

Jones underwent an exam by another doctor and medical testing Wednesday, Pattis said. The doctor, Amy Offutt, wrote in a letter that she examined Jones for "acute medical issues that were time-sensitive and potentially serious" and lab tests were pending.

Hiring

from Page 1

She cautioned that increasing energy prices could have an impact on Connecticut's economy and labor force.

Patrick Flaherty, research director at the Department of Labor, credited the continued retreat of COVID-19 that devastated the state's and national labor forces.

"Since the beginning of the pandemic, the labor market has shown underlying strength with job growth increasing at moments of low infection rates," he said. "February continues this pattern."

Connecticut's labor force is still down more than 56,000 jobs since February 2020, which Chris DiPentima, president of the Connecticut Business & Industry Association, said is alarming.

"Unemployment remains unacceptably high — the highest of the New England states and over a percentage point above the national rate," he said.

Retail stores, shut by Gov. Ned Lamont and public health officials in the spring of 2020 to halt the spread of COVID-19, were among the hardest hit businesses in the state. The number of jobs in the trade, transportation and utilities sector plunged nearly 18% between December 2019 before the pandemic and April 2020.

It has more than recovered its losses, posting 297,700 jobs in February, greater than before COVID-19.

Who hired?

Trade, Transportation & Utilities: 4,800 jobs. (The sector includes retail and wholesale trade, warehouses and utilities).

Educational and Health Services: 1,900 jobs.

Leisure and Hospitality: 1,200 jobs.

Manufacturing: 500 jobs.

Financial Activities unchanged.

Where did jobs decline?

Professional and Business Services: (Includes professional, scientific, technical and management jobs). Down 1,100 jobs.

Government: Down 900 jobs.

Construction and Mining: Down 100 jobs.

Which towns and cities posted job gains?

Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk: Up 4,100 jobs, to 395,600.

Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford: Added 2,600 jobs, to 563,000.

New Haven: Up 700 jobs, to 293,200.

Norwich-New London-Westerly: 500 jobs added, to 118,800.

Danbury, increased by 300 jobs, to 75,000.

The number of jobs declined in one city

Waterbury: Down 400 jobs, to 65,500.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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Please take notice FARMINGTON STORAGE, 155 Scott Swamp Road Farmington CT 06032, Intends to hold a public sale to the highest bidder of the property stored to the following tenant at said facility.
The Sale will occur as an online auction Via www.Storagetreasures.com on March 22,2022 at 11:00am.
Unless otherwise stated the content of the unit include a free-standing basketball hoop and metal shelf.

Shamari Eason, last known address; 235 Camp St Bristol, CT 06010.
This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply.
3/25, 4/1/2022 7171987

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Please take notice FARMINGTON STORAGE, 155 Scott Swamp Road Farmington CT 06032, Intends to hold a public sale to the highest bidder of the property stored to the following tenant at said facility.
The Sale will occur as an online auction Via www.Storagetreasures.com on April 1,2022 at 11:00am.
Unless otherwise stated the contents of the unit include a free-standing basketball hoop and metal shelf.
Shamari Eason, last known address; 235 Camp St Bristol, CT 06010.
This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply.
3/18, 3/25/2022 7170015

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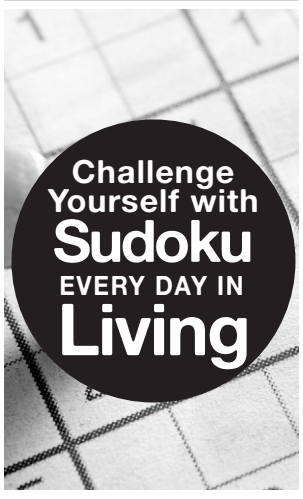
MIDDLETOWN ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
APRIL 7, 2022

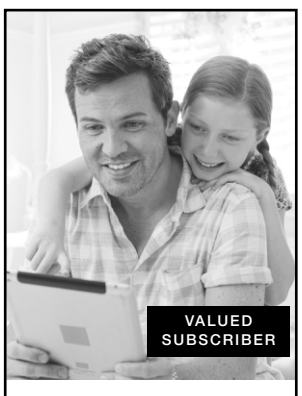
PUBLIC COMMENT MAY BE LIMITED TO FIVE MINUTES. PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS PRIOR TO OR AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

1. Request for a variance of Section 28.03 to construct additions to the existing building at 218 Smith St the NRCD zone. Applicant/agent Zumra Cucunjanin V2022-2.

2. Request for a G.S. 14-54 location approval for the sales of used cars at 15 Walnut St. Applicant/Agent Timothy Potvin/Lincoln Auto World. GS 14-54 2022-1

Steven Kovach, Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
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LIVING
WWW.COURANT.COM/FEATURES

Films with blossoms, baseball, hats for spring

By Moira Macdonald
The Seattle Times


Dick Van Dyke and Julie Andrews star in the 1964 film "Mary Poppins," which is also filled with cherry blossoms that represent spring. **DISNEY**

Fall movies are a thing, winter movies are definitely a thing, but spring movies?

Spring is a distinctive season — not my favorite, but hey, we all do our own thing — and it's a little harder to pin down as a distinctive movie look.

What is a spring movie, really, but a summer movie with a light sweater on?

But I came up with three things that mean spring to me — cherry blossoms, baseball and hats — and found three lovely movies for each.

I've noted the subscription streaming services that include the film in italics below where applicable, but all can be rented from services such as Vudu, Google Play, Apple TV or Amazon Prime Video.

Cherry blossoms

■ "Mary Poppins" (1964): The recent sequel was a delight, but there's nothing like the original, with Julie Andrews being practically perfect and Dick Van Dyke doing the oddest Cockney accent you'll ever hear. And, appropriately for a story set at No. 17 Cherry Tree Lane, it's filled with gorgeous pink clouds of cherry blossoms. You can't watch it without feeling more chim-chim-che-ree. *(Disney+)*

■ "Our Little Sister" (2016): Japanese filmmaker Hirokazu Kore-eda makes lovely, quiet movies about families. In this one, three 20-something sisters living in a seaside town decide to take in their teenage half-sister, the daughter of their recently deceased father and his third wife. Seasons pass, and you can practically smell the perfume of the cherry blossoms when spring comes


Anya Taylor-Joy, right, dons a joy-inducing bonnet in "Emma," based on the Jane Austen novel. **FOCUS FEATURES**

— a change as constant and comforting, this film tells us, as family.

■ "The Wind Rises" (2014): The blossoms here are of the animated variety (and both pink and lavender), but are no less breathtaking. For a while, it looked like this moving film about a Japanese engineer and designer of planes might be the great Hayao Miyazaki's last; now word comes that he is, in his 80s, working on a new film. This one, like all of his work, is nearly all hand-drawn; you'll get happily lost in his endless skies and glorious flowers. *(HBO Max)*

Baseball

■ "A League of Their Own" (1992): Spring means the return of baseball. And it also means it's time to rewatch Penny Marshall's delightful ode to the first female professional baseball league, and to the fact that "there's no crying in baseball." (There may be none in baseball, but I've never gotten past the scene where Geena Davis says, "Oh, sweetie" — you know the scene I mean — without completely losing it.) Lots of great baseball action, and the cast — particularly Davis, Tom Hanks, Lori Petty and Madonna — is a joy. *(Peacock)*

■ "Sugar" (2008): This lovely film about a young Dominican baseball player's version of the American dream didn't get much attention when it played theaters a while back; luckily, it's never too late to discover it. Algenis Perez Soto plays a 19-year-old pitcher known as Sugar (for his love of desserts and his genuine sweetness) who's spotted one day by a baseball scout and quickly finds himself in Arizona for spring training and Iowa for a minor-league season. Filmmakers Ryan Fleck and Anna Boden wonderfully capture that delicious thwack a baseball makes as it makes contact with a catcher's mitt, as well as a young man's quest for an ever-elusive goal. *(HBO Max)*

■ "Moneyball" (2011): A sports movie without a whole lot of sports in it, this breezy comedy is about men in backrooms debating player averages, and how one of those men (played by Jonah Hill) came up with a revolutionary way to build a baseball team. And it's about how Brad Pitt, as a former baseball golden boy turned manager of the Oakland A's, does that effortless movie-star thing that he does; the turf seems just a bit greener when he's on screen. Sunny (particularly Pitt), funny and great fun. *(Netflix, Hulu)*

Hats

■ "Easter Parade" (1948): Oh, you didn't think I was going to leave this one off, did you? Fred Astaire and Judy Garland co-starred, for the only time in their careers, in this film, billed on its original poster as "the happiest musical ever made." Fred dances (and sings), Judy sings (and dances), and there are Easter hats galore marching down Fifth Avenue atop their proud wearers. Spring personified.

■ "Emma" (2020): Despite director Autumn de Wilde's first name, this stylish Jane Austen pastiche is in every way a spring movie, from the charming romance at its center to the delightful bonnets perched on the characters' heads, as if they dropped down from hat heaven. Having played theaters just before the pandemic hit, it seems to stem from another, prettier time. Watching it just might make flowers grow.

■ "Enchanted April" (1991): It's hard to believe that this ageless movie came out more than 30 years ago. Based on the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim (itself a perfect spring read), "Enchanted April" is about four women enduring a dreary winter in post-World War I England who save up for a spring vacation at a beautiful Italian villa, advertised as having multitudes of "wisteria and sunshine." Sounds about right, doesn't it?

CELEBRITIES

Harry Styles to release new album

From news services


Harry Styles is set to release his new album, "Harry's House," on May 20. **JAY L. CLENDENIN/LOS ANGELES TIMES 2021**

Some pleasing news for Harry Styles fans: The English pop star is releasing a new album this spring. On Wednesday, Styles and Sony Music announced that the 28-year-old performer's third studio album, "Harry's House," will debut May 20.

"Harry's House" is Styles' latest solo effort, following the releases of his Grammy-nominated sophomore record, "Fine Line," and his debut studio album, "Sign of the Times." The singer previously released several albums as a member of the boy band One Direction.

As of Wednesday, not much information was available about the upcoming album — except that it will consist of 13 tracks and is available to pre-save on Spotify and Apple Music.

The singer's announcement comes shortly after he launched his new beauty and apparel brand, Pleasing, which recently named Mick Fleetwood of Fleetwood Mac fame as its official ambassador.

Styles has also been busy pursuing a career in acting since making his big-screen debut in 2017's "Dunkirk." Premiering in September is Olivia Wilde's psychological thriller "Don't Worry Darling," and then he'll appear in Michael Grandage's period drama "My Policeman."

Meghan's podcast to focus on female stereotypes: The first podcast from Prince Harry and Meghan's partnership with Spotify will focus on harmful labels and stereotypes applied to women.

The "Archetypes" podcast will be hosted by the Duchess of Sussex and is expected to launch this summer. The series will feature interviews with historians and experts to "investigate the labels that try to hold women back," according to a summary posted on Spotify.

The streaming service on Thursday released a teaser that opened with clips of people using the words "slut" and "skanky" and talking about the stereotypes applied to women's strength and intelligence.

Bieber drops lawsuit against Twitter users: Justin Bieber has dropped the lawsuit that he filed against two social media users who accused him on Twitter of sexual assault.

Attorneys for the singer requested a dismissal of the defamation lawsuit in Los Angeles Superior Court last week, according to court documents. The request was made with prejudice for all parties and all causes of action, meaning Bieber cannot refile the same claim against the two Jane Does mentioned in the lawsuit. The documents did not indicate whether they had agreed on a settlement.

The pop sensation, 28, filed the $20 million suit in June 2020 seeking $10 million from each defendant who alleged that he assaulted them, one in 2014 and the other in 2015. He claimed the testimonies they posted on Twitter were "outrageous lies" that are "probably fabricated" and "factually impossible."

The singer's legal team said he has "indisputable documentary evidence" that the social media users made up their stories. The complaint said Bieber turned to legal action "to clear his name and set the record straight."

March 25 birthdays: Critic Gene Shalit is 96. Actor Paul Michael Glaser is 79. Musician Elton John is 75. Actor Mary Gross is 69. Actor Marcia Cross is 60. Actor Lisa Gay Hamilton is 58. Actor Sarah Jessica Parker is 57. Actor Lee Pace is 43. Comedian Alex Moffat is 40. Singer Katharine McPhee is 38. Comedian Chris Redd is 37.



ASK AMY

By Amy Dickinson
askamy@amydickinson.com Twitter@askingamy

Mom wonders how to limit gifts at birthday

Dear Readers: Every year I step away from my column briefly to work on other creative projects. Today's "Best of" topic from 10 years ago is: "present tense."

Dear Amy: My oldest son will be turning 5 next month. We are planning a party at a local park with simple games and food. My problem is I don't want guests to bring presents. He has lots of toys! However, I don't want him to be hurt with the expectation of opening presents. Please help!

— *Present Tense*

Dear Present Tense: At your son's age, giving and receiving gifts is important, not because of the stuff you get, but because of the social exchange — that of generosity and gratitude — that children demonstrate as they celebrate birthdays.

One way to balance the number of toys your son has is to ask him to choose one older toy to put in a basket for each new toy he receives. You will then recycle these "basket toys" (eventually) by giving them to another family member, donating them to a local charity or shelter, or by having a yard sale.

Dear Amy: I agree with you that gift exchanges are important for young children. A friend of mine handled this by asking all of her little guests to bring food, a toy, etc., for a dog — and they donated all of these gifts to their local shelter. It was a lot of fun, and the kids enjoyed it too.

— *Faithful Reader*

Dear Faithful: This is a great idea.

Dear Amy: We dealt with this issue in our household by asking guests to bring a favorite book. The birthday boy opened them at the party, thanked the guests, read them and then we donated them to our local book drive.

— *Worked For Us*

Dear Worked: I love the idea of a book party. Thank you.

Dear Amy: My daughter is turning 5 next month, and she has asked for a big party with her friends.

We're concerned about gifts. Specifically, we're worried about people giving Barbies or worse, those Bratz or Monster High dolls. We don't have Barbies in the house, and the Bratz/Monster High dolls are simply disturbing.

At a recent party for one of her friends (also turning 5), almost every gift was a Barbie, Bratz or some other "fashion" doll.

What? Girls don't like books, nature, space, coloring, crafts, puzzles?

Is there any way to let people know that we don't want "fashion" dolls in the house?

We could say no gifts at all, but around here, people bring gifts anyway. If we do nothing, most of her gifts will be Barbies — or worse. We won't allow her to keep them, and that's not a great outcome either. So, our choices seem to be either 1.) cancel the party or 2.) include a small note on the invitation saying, "No fashion dolls, please." What do you think we should do?

— *Concerned Parents*

Dear Concerned: You could try to control the gifts coming into your house by having a "theme" party, asking parents to help their youngsters give an "outer space" related book or toy, or to bring something related to bugs, horses or NASCAR. However, ultimately you cannot control other parents (or kids). And so you must do the challenging work of educating your daughter about the messages conveyed through these fashion dolls and about your own values regarding them.

Dear Amy: I grew up playing with these dolls and am now an avid reader, expect to graduate near the top of my class, and have a very healthy self-image.

— *Better Than Barbie*

Dear Better: Thank you for pointing out that these dolls might not be as "dangerous" as this mother thinks.

Dear Amy: When I was growing up, I loved my Barbies. I lined them up, and we played school. I taught them what I learned in class. I helped them solve little-girl problems. For a child, there is much more to a Barbie than the way she looks.

This mom should relax and allow her child's imagination to take over.

— *Barbie Fan*

Dear Fan: I agree. In my experience as a parent, the worst thing about Barbies was trying to get their shoes to stay on those tiny pointy feet.

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The secret is out on this 'Bridgerton' star

After years of career setbacks, Coughlan is kind of a big deal

By Alexis Soloski
The New York Times

In January, right around her 35th birthday, Irish actor Nicola Coughlan took what she called "a mega-holiday" — New York City; Austin, Texas; Hawaii, New York City again.

Back in Manhattan, she played tourist: She ate at fancy restaurants, went to a taping of "Saturday Night Live," and saw a Broadway show. The show was "Company," a musical about a 35-year-old in the midst of an existential crisis, and as Coughlan left the theater, she saw a towering Times Square billboard.

The billboard, an ad for the new season of the saucy Netflix costume drama "Bridgerton," showed her own face at the center.

"We walked up the street a little bit, and there it was, like, huge, huge, huge," she said. "Oh my goodness, it was massive."

The widely celebrated Netflix comedy "Derry Girls" gave Coughlan — who had been working at an optician's office in her hometown, Galway, Ireland, only a year before she was cast — her first substantial role. That role eventually led to the one in "Bridgerton," which became one of Netflix's most watched series ever and returns for its second season Friday.

As a star of two of the most beloved shows on the world's largest streaming service, Coughlan is now kind of a big deal. With a billboard to prove it.

For Coughlan, the youngest daughter of an army officer father and a homemaker mother, success didn't come overnight; it came over thousands of nights. After college, where she studied English and classics, she enrolled in a six-month foundation course at the Oxford School of Drama. She was turned down for the multiyear course. Then she followed her new best friend, playwright Camilla Whitehill, to the Birmingham School of Acting, where she completed a one-year course. She was turned down for the multiyear one there, too.

At Oxford, and then at Birmingham, Coughlan developed a gift for comedy and, because she has always looked mind-bendingly young for her age, a knack for playing children.

Afterward, she moved to London, where she took a series of retail jobs — beauty products, frozen yogurt — and tried to find work as a grown-up actor. She didn't succeed. Petite, pert, childlike, she couldn't attract the interest of a manager or an agent. More than once, her bank balance dropped to double digits. More than once, she had to move back home.

Finally, Coughlan, by then nearly 30, landed a role as a posh 15-year-old girl in the 2016 two-hander "Jess and Joe Forever," at the Orange Tree Theater in London. Her performance attracted the interest of an agent, who secured her an audition for "Derry Girls," a comedy about a group of schoolgirls — and one boy — in Northern Ireland in the 1990s, at the periphery of the country's sectarian conflict. The audition was rigorous: a six-month process of callbacks and chemistry reads.

"It was torture," she said. "I wanted it so badly."

Even then, Coughlan wasn't sure that she would find another job. "I was like, Well, that's it now. I struck gold, but it won't happen again," she said.

She whiffed on several subsequent auditions and when the producers of "Bridgerton" contacted her agent, she didn't hold out much hope.

An assistant casting director brought her in to read for Eloise Bridgerton, the spunky, freethinking fifth-born sibling. Coughlan didn't think that the audition had gone particularly well. But when the showrunner Chris Van Dusen saw her tape, he knew he had to cast her as Penelope Featherington, Eloise's 17-year-old best friend.

"I called all of our other producers into the room and showed them the tape," Van Dusen recalled. "I'm happy to say that everyone loved her as much as I did."

Told that she had the part, Coughlan tempered her enthusiasm. She had known plenty of actors who were hired onto prestige projects and then fired when the studio demanded a bigger name. "I should have been like, 'This is amazing,'" she said. "Instead, I was like, 'This is fishy. I don't know about this.'" She remained tense throughout the first table read.

But she wasn't fired. And in the midst of her fittings, she finally learned, via a Reddit forum, how large her role would be and that it was effectively two roles: the wallflower Penelope — the face she presents to the world — and also the cunning Lady Whistledown, the nom de plume Penelope uses to write and publish a scandal sheet with the power to bring Regency England to its petticoated knees.

The show will bring further challenges in the future because eventually Penelope will play out her own love story. It comes in the fourth book of the series of novels that inspired the show, "Romancing Mister Bridgerton," so it may or may not comprise the fourth season. (The show has already been renewed through season four.)



Irish actor Nicola Coughlan, who is seen March 8 in Paris, stars in two of the most beloved shows on Netflix, "Bridgerton" and "Derry Girls." **ELLIOTT VERDIER/THE NEW YORK TIMES**

But already "I feel terrified," Coughlan said. "I'm probably more comfortable being awkward and funny, so it's going to be a massive challenge for me. Because it's not my comfort zone."

The attention that "Bridgerton" has brought hasn't always been comfortable either. "Fame is a weird thing," she said.

The worst part has been the online scrutiny of her body. Many of the comments about her appearance have been positive, though some have been negative. She doesn't find any of them helpful. "I'm like, I'm existing," she said. "And it's not anyone's business."

She recently took to Instagram to ask her followers not to send her any comments on her body. "It's really hard to take the weight of thousands of opinions on how you look being sent directly to you every day," she wrote.

Still, fame has its upsides. She appeared on "The Great British Baking Show." ("Most definitely the best experience of my life," she said, despite the mess she made of her Swiss roll.) She became close friends with "Queer Eye" star Jonathan Van Ness after she made a hoodie with his face on it and showed it off on social media. When she went to "Saturday Night Live," she and Kristen Wiig hugged. Her handbag game is extremely on point.

And she is eager to see where her career will take her. Maybe she'll host "Saturday Night Live" one day. Maybe she'll finally play a character of legal age.

"In a weird way," she said. "I feel like I'm just getting started."

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Aries (March 21-April 19): It's one of those days when pushing too enthusiastically could leave you feeling rather alone. Accomplish as much as you can, but take things one step at a time and don't worry about proving your worth right now.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): A voice might be whispering unkind things to you today, but it could be coming from closer than you realize. You're probably ready to seek out new horizons — until your subconscious reminds you of all the reasons you can't. A lot of those so-called reasons could be merely self-made boundaries.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): Your support networks could feel anything but supportive today. Bonds connect you to other people, but people push your buttons without even meaning to. You're more inclined to desire alone time than usual under this energy, but you can't always get what you want.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): Someone might make a few casual observations to you today and remind you of all the things you have yet to achieve. You may want to partner up, but that could cause problems. Constructive criticism could simply feel like criticism, but try not to take it to heart.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Your current responsibilities feel like a heavy stone around your neck, dragging you down when you'd rather run free. It's not fun to focus solely on productivity, but the sooner you check off every box, the sooner you can ride off into the sunset for more interesting destinations.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Trying to have fun could be a little less fun than you expect it to be. Even if you want to enjoy yourself, you could get sidetracked with a sense of guilt or embarrassment. You may feel the need to run and hide from the spotlight you craved moments ago. This is temporary, so don't worry about becoming a recluse.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Today is something of an emotional ocean, one which might be easier to swim through on your own. This could get you into a wounding encounter with someone, perhaps because you don't see eye-to-eye or they aren't being considerate of your needs. Fly solo for now.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): It's the kind of day when anything — no matter how important it is or how careful you are — could slip through the cracks. You could feel rather all over the place frazzled, and this will only get more chaotic. The best bet is to have as few things on your to-do list as possible!

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Being productive is generally a good thing, unless it winds up putting a damper on everything else. You've probably got your eyes set on making it rain! Remember all the excitement and joy you could be experiencing if only you didn't have to tend to your responsibilities?

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You might desire to do as you please and follow your own path, but adventuring alone could leave you feeling pretty lonely. Light up with deep-feeling energy. Those feelings could be rather raw. Don't worry if you don't feel up to much today — just relax and trust that tomorrow should be brighter.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): There's no easy way to get your point across right now. You may feel checked out at the moment and be prone to taking your own approach. Complicated communications could result in people trying to contact you. Hanging up a do-not-disturb sign might be a good idea.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Breaking out of any confines to go off and do as you please may tempt you today, especially whenever you're surrounded by a group of like-minded friends. You're probably in a social mood, connecting you with people near and far. A budgetary constraint might get in your way.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Associated Press

On March 25, 1911, 146 people were killed when fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Co. in New York.

In 1931, in the so-called "Scottsboro Boys" case, nine young Black men were taken off a train in Alabama, accused of raping two white women; after years of convictions, death sentences and imprisonment, the nine were eventually vindicated.

In 1947, a coal-dust explosion inside the Centralia Coal Co. Mine No. 5 in Illinois claimed 111 lives; 31 men survived.

In 1960, Ray Charles recorded "Georgia on My Mind."

In 1990, 87 peoplewere killed when fire raced through a social club in New York City.

In 2020, the Senate unanimously passed a $2.2 trillion economic rescue package steering aid to businesses, workers and health care systems.

BONUS PUZZLE PAGE

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				4				
	2			1			4	5
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Level: 1 **2** 3 4

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit *www.sudoku.org.uk.*

8	1	4	5	6	3	2	7	6
9	3	5	1	2	7	6	4	8
9	7	2	4	8	9	3	1	5
2	9	8	9	5	1	7	3	4
4	6	7	8	3	2	5	9	1
3	5	1	6	7	4	8	9	2
5	4	6	7	1	8	9	2	3
7	2	9	3	4	5	1	8	9
1	8	3	2	9	9	4	5	7

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WORD SEARCH

Wordsearch: weather watch

326

Can you find all the words hidden in the grid? Read backwards or forwards, up or down, or diagonally. The words will always be in a straight line. Cross them off the list as you find them.

E S J V N O O S N O M O Y P I C T T
L I G H T N I N G S E T T L E D V S
C Y C L O N E T H A W E H E A T T O
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M Q O S M J F L O O D P C R D H T F
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BRIGHT
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DAMP
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DOWNPOUR
FLOOD
FOGGY
FROST
GALE
HAIL
HEAT
HIGH
HUMID
ICICLE
ISOBAR
LIGHTNING
MILD
MIST
MOIST
MONSOON
MUGGY
NIPPY
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SEVERE
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By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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_____

_____

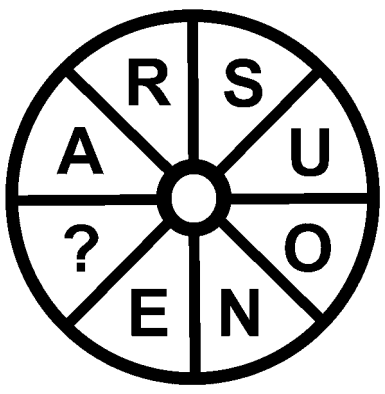
NEST WING FLIGHT FEATHER

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1-1-20

www.bogglebrainbusters.com

WordWheel



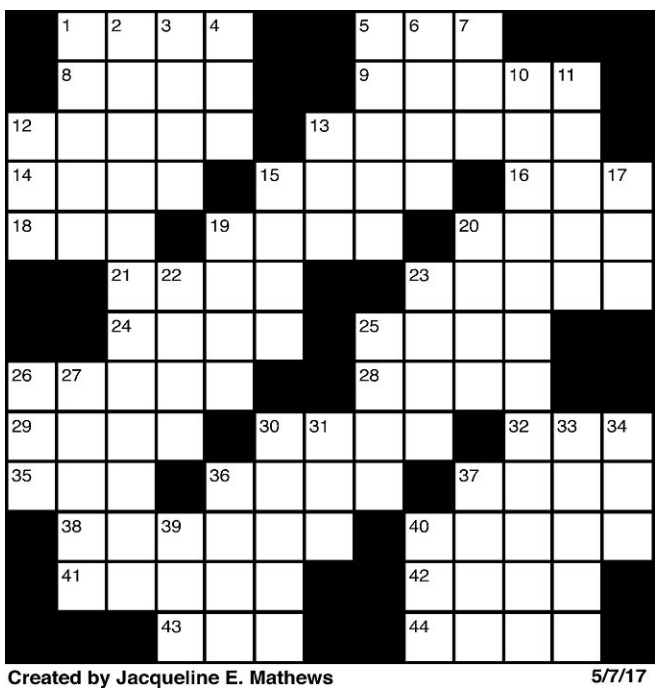
Insert the missing letter to complete an eight-letter word reading clockwise or counterclockwise.

RAVENOUS

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TV CROSSWORD

by Jacqueline E. Mathews



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 5/7/17

ACROSS
1 "That '70s __"
5 Actress MacGraw
8 "America's Funniest __ Videos"
9 Disney's fawn
12 Actress Julia __-Dreyfus
13 "All __!"; cry from a train conductor
14 "America's __ Wanted"
15 Arden and Plumb
16 Actor McKellen
18 Gobbled up
19 "How to Get __ with Murder"
20 Actress Madeline __
21 Alan of "Gilligan's Island"
23 Narrow boat
24 Actress Thurman and her namesakes
25 Beaver's dad
26 "__ Trees"
28 "__ want for Christmas is my two front teeth..."
29 Carney and Garfunkel
30 "An American __"; animated film about Fievel
32 Historical period
35 "__ Hard"; Bruce Willis movie
36 __ down the river; betray
37 "Bus __"; Marilyn Monroe romance film
38 Frasier and Niles
40 Actress Debi __
41 Gomez Addams' portrayer
42 Elderly
43 McKinley and Rushmore: abbr.
44 Hooks and Murray

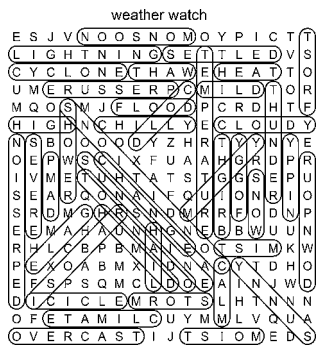
DOWN
1 "Just __ Me!"
2 HGTV series about home seekers
3 Leave out
4 Parker or Montgomery
5 "__ Road"; Beatles album
6 Asian nation
7 "__ Big Girl Now"
10 Actor on "NCIS"
11 Neighbor of Montana
12 Monogram for the author of "Little Women"
13 Maya Rudolph's role on "Up All Night"
15 Lamb producers
17 180 degrees from SSW
19 Actor Alda
20 Malden or Malone
22 French friends
23 "__ of the Wild"; Clark Gable movie
25 Cry loudly
26 "__ About You"
27 __ Durance of "Smallville"
30 Adolescents
31 Pacino and Roker
33 Highways
34 Spring month: abbr.
36 In a __; miffed
37 Long story
39 Source of quick cash, for short
40 Hot Lips Houlihan's rank: abbr.

	S	H	O	W			A	L	I															
	H	O	M	E			B	A	M	B	I													
L	O	U	I	S		A	B	O	A	R	D													
M	O	S	T		E	V	E	S		I	A	N												
A	T	E		A	W	A	Y		K	A	H	N												
		H	A	L	E			C	A	N	O	E												
		U	M	A	S		W	A	R	D														
M	E	N	I	N			A	L	L	I														
A	R	T	S		T	A	I	L		E	R	A												
D	I	E		S	E	L	L		S	T	O	P												
	C	R	A	N	E	S		M	A	Z	A	R												
	A	S	T	I	N			A	G	E	D													
			M	T	S			J	A	N	S													

5/14/17

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weather watch



	B		M		B		L		R		J			
N	A	K	E	D	E	Y	E		I	D	E	S		
	K		D		A		T		F	E	S	S		
D	E	B	E	E	R	S		E	L	I	T	E		
		A	A	N	D	E		L	E	S	E			
A	M	S		C		A	B	A		M	R	T		
	P	E	A			T	A	N	S			A		
T	E	M	P	E	R		S	T	O	P	A	T		
	G	A	S	P	E	D		R	A	I	M	I		
	S	N	E	A	D		C	A	R	T	O	N		

M	E	D	A	L	L	I	O	N

JUMBLE

JUMBLE®

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DYNHA

GOUBS

RIYVEF

DENORY

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Check out the new, free JUST JUMBLE app

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



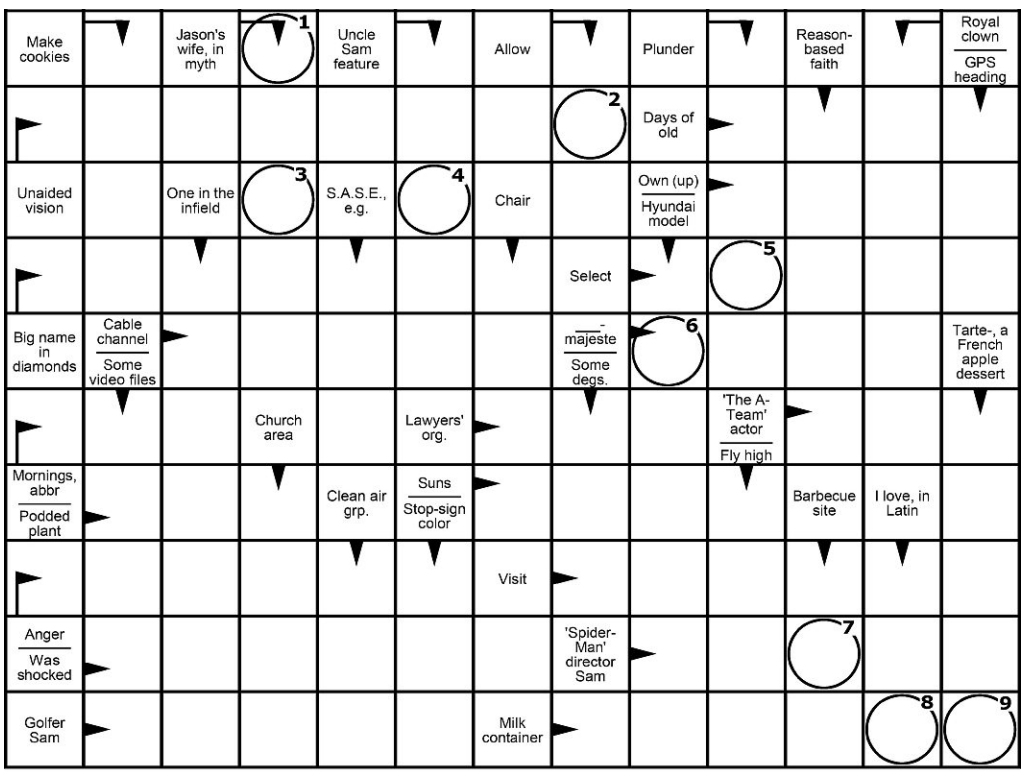
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

"_____ - _____"

Jumbles: HANDY BOGUS VERIFY YONDER
Answer: When the group of friends took a photo together, they took a photo of — "EVERY-BUDDY"

ARROW WORDS

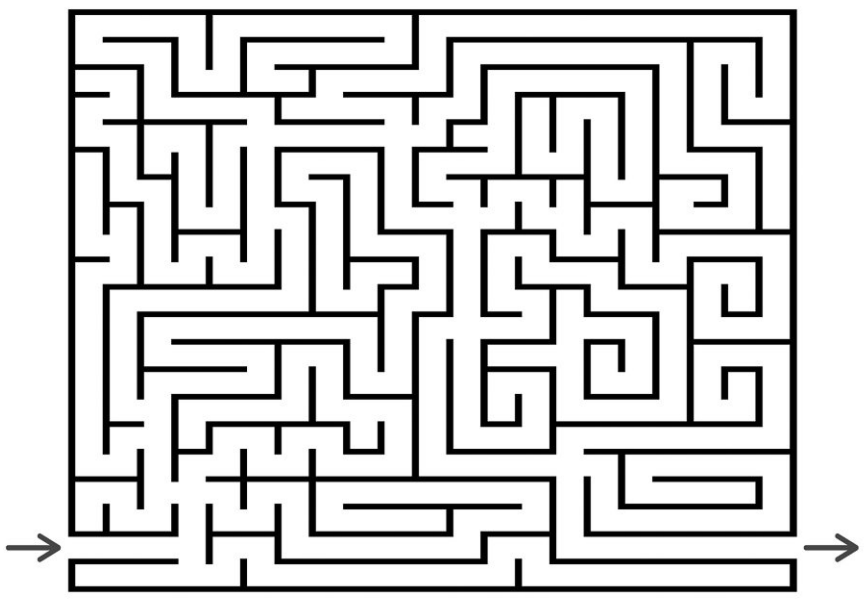
Fill in the grid using the clues provided in the direction of the arrows. When complete, unscramble the letters in the circles to reveal a mystery word.



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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

KIDNEWS FUN & GAMES





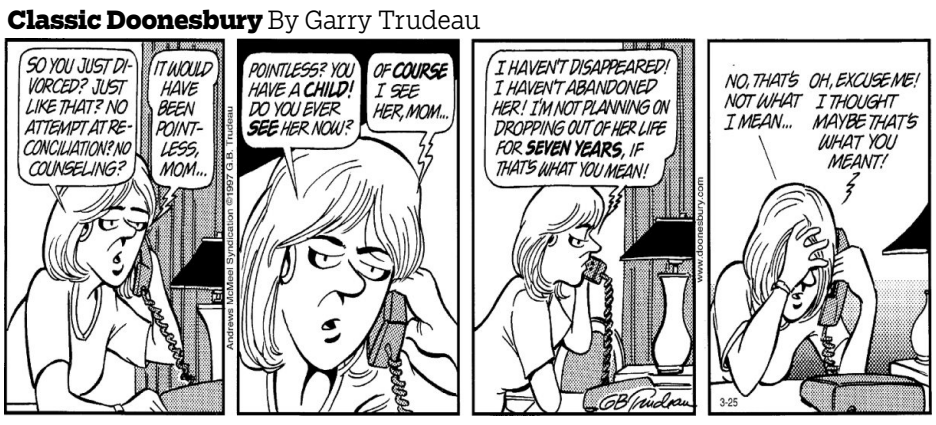
Find 5 differences



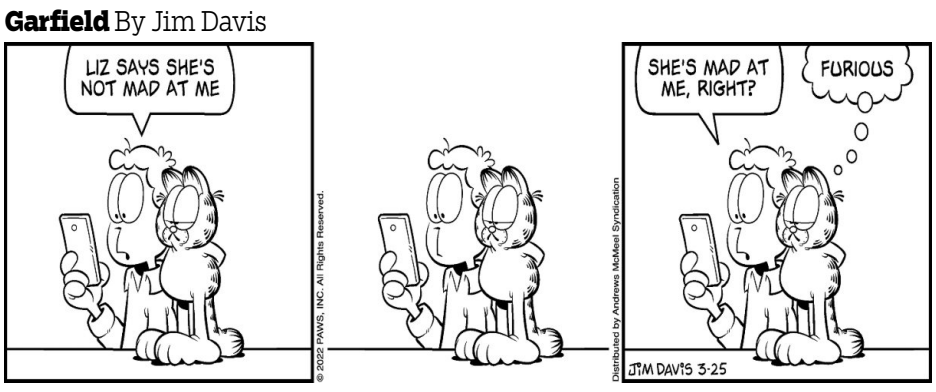
Peanuts By Charles M. Schulz



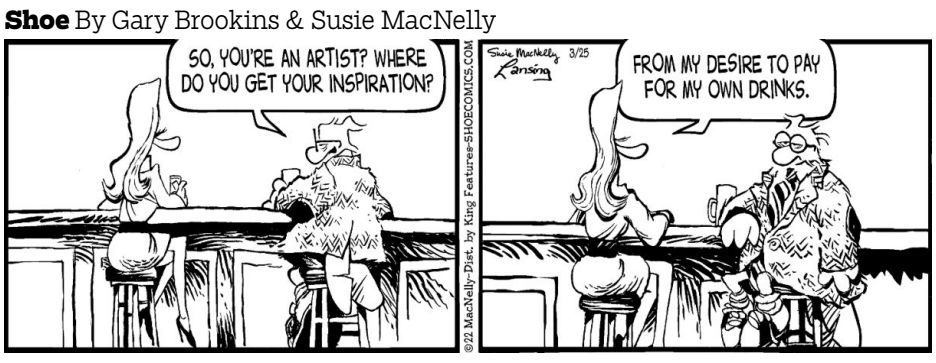
Classic Doonesbury By Garry Trudeau



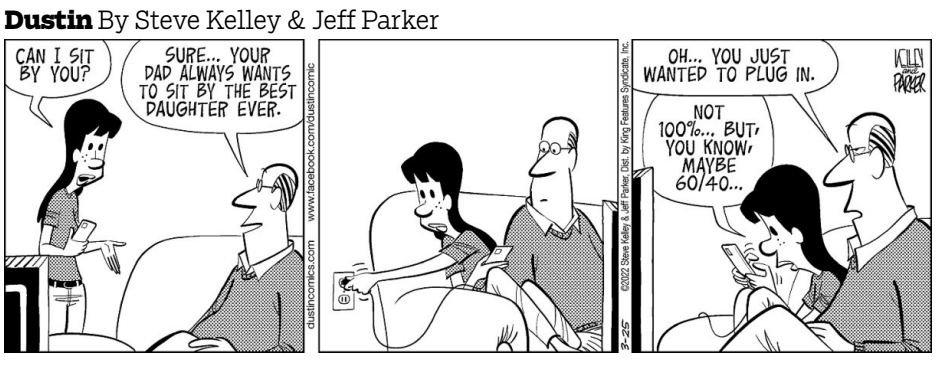
Garfield By Jim Davis



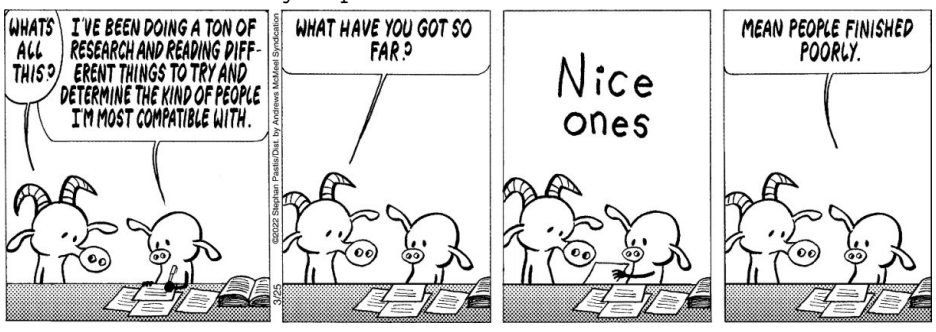
Shoe By Gary Brookins & Susie MacNelly



Dustin By Steve Kelley & Jeff Parker



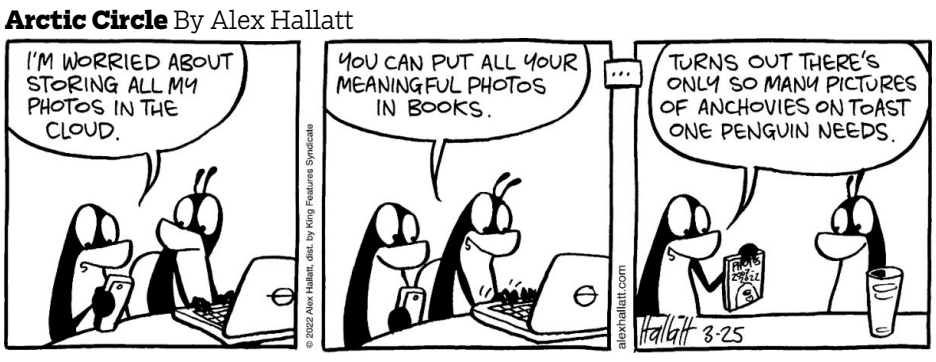
Pearls Before Swine By Stephan Pastis



Mutts By Patrick McDonnell



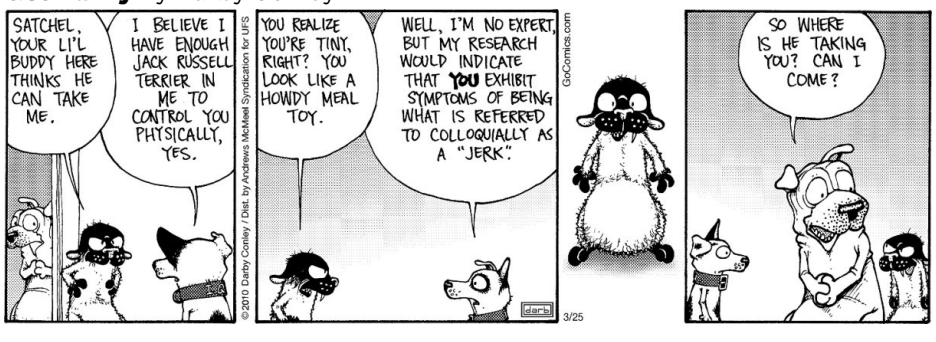
Arctic Circle By Alex Hallatt



Jump Start By Robb Armstrong



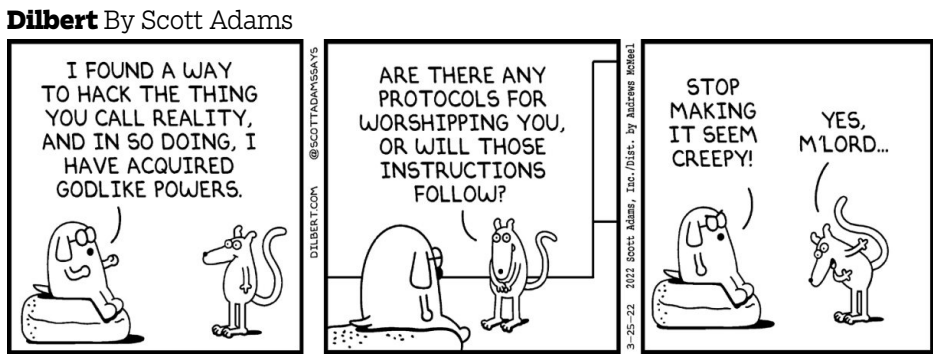
Get Fuzzy By Darby Conley



Blondie By Dean Young and John Marshall



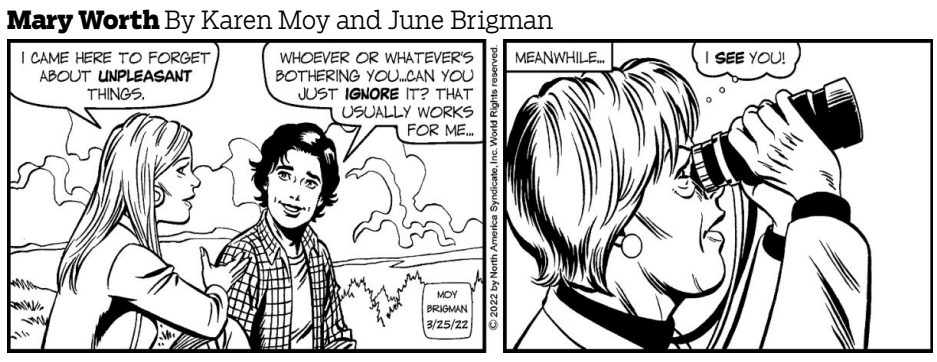
Dilbert By Scott Adams



Gil Thorp By Neal Rubin and Frank McLaughlin



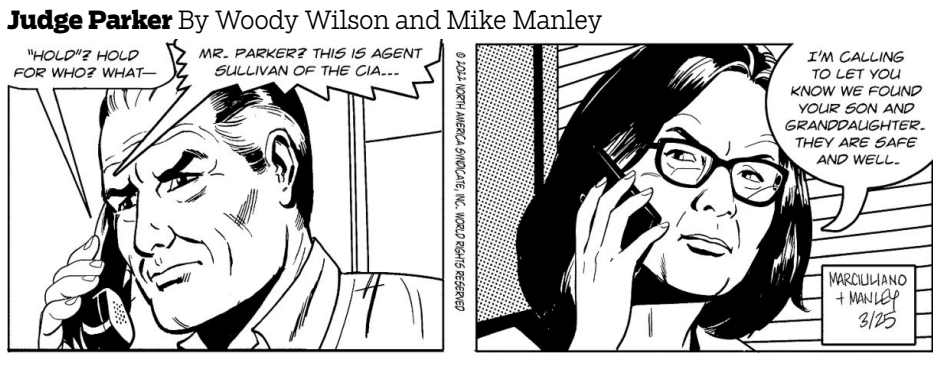
Mary Worth By Karen Moy and June Brigman



Rex Morgan, M.D. By Terry Beatty



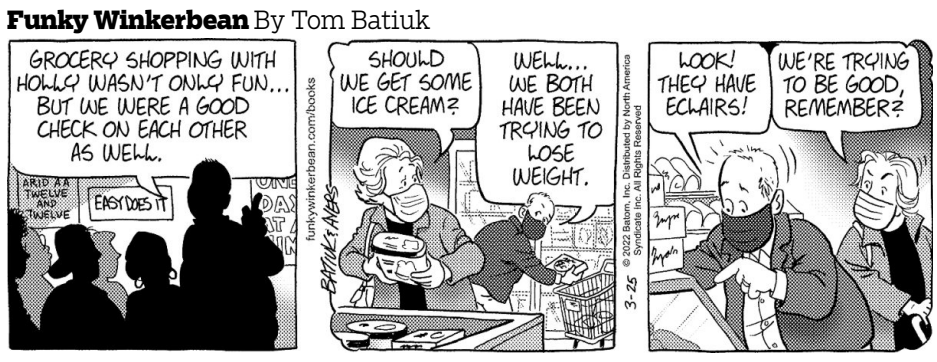
Judge Parker By Woody Wilson and Mike Manley



Baldo By Cantu and Castellanos



Funky Winkerbean By Tom Batiuk



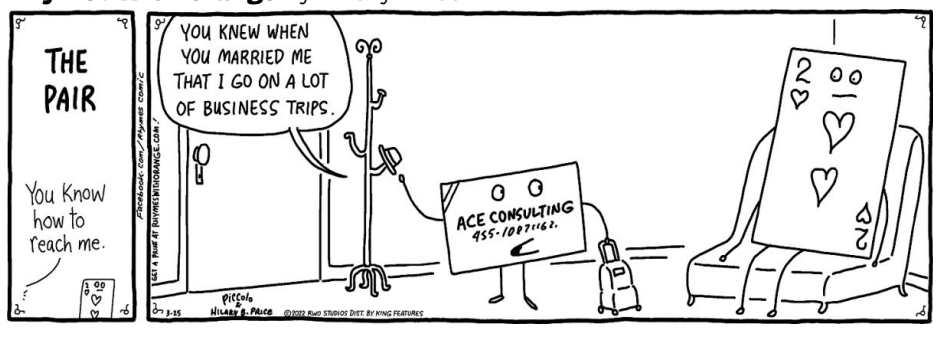
Lio By Mark Tatulli



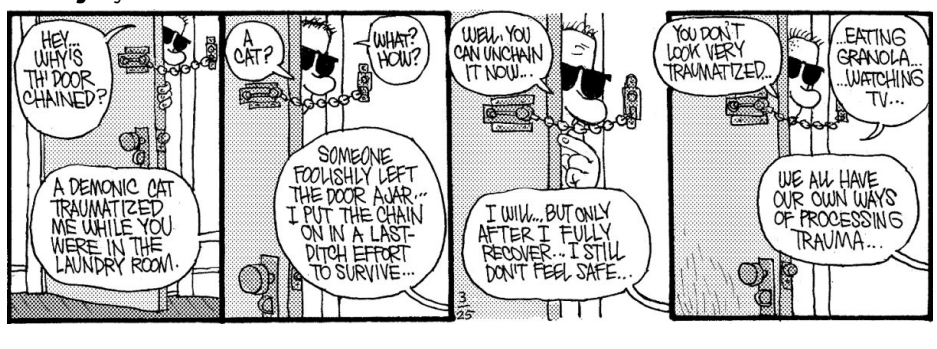
Wizard Of Id By Johnny Hart and Brant Parker



Rhymes With Orange By Hilary Price

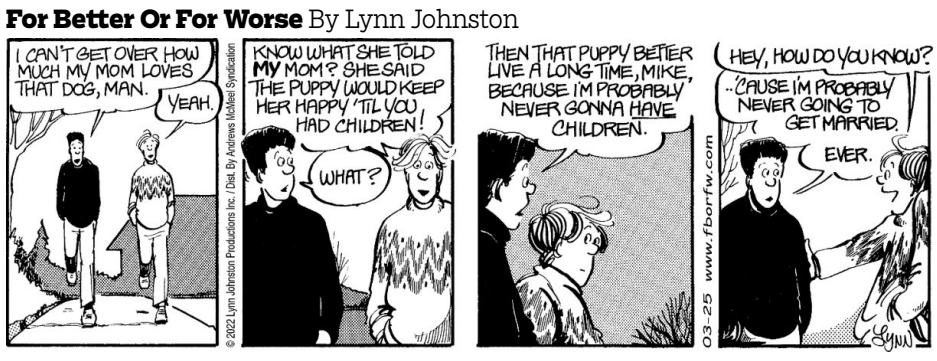


Blondie By Dean Young and John Marshall

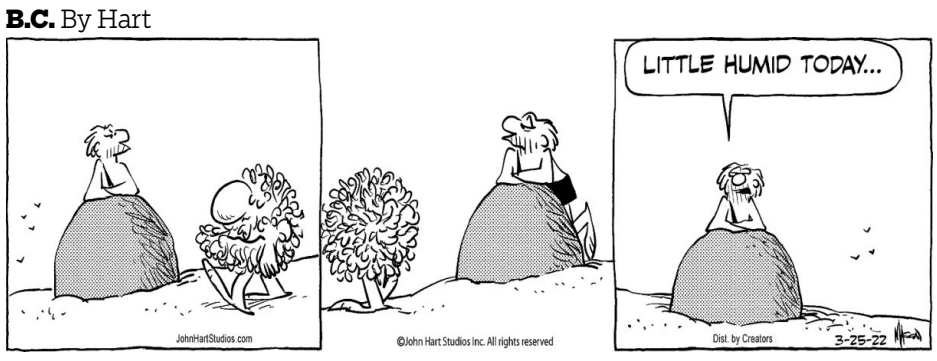


Monty By Jim Meddick

For Better Or For Worse By Lynn Johnston



B.C. By Hart



Beetle Bailey by Mort, Greg & Brian Walker



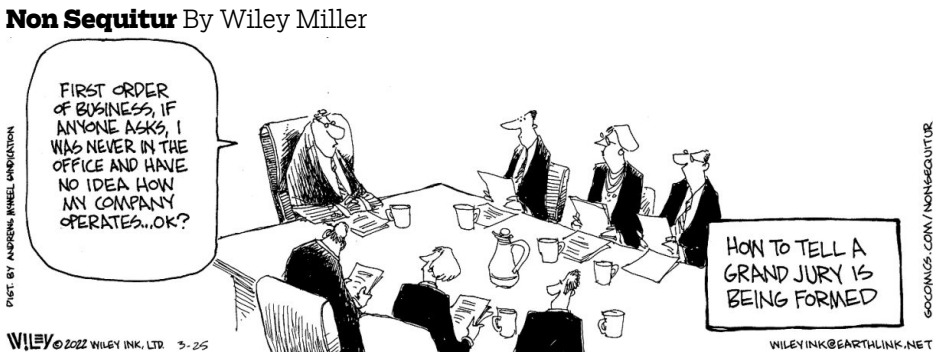
Hi & Lois By Greg and Brian Walker and Chance Browne



Hagar The Horrible By Chris Browne



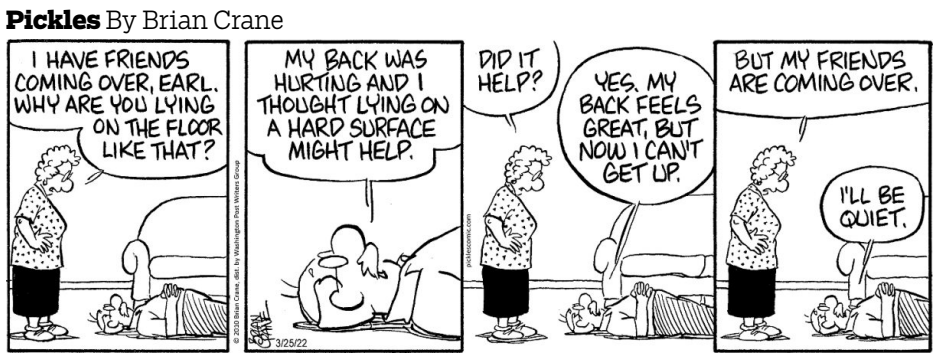
Non Sequitur By Wiley Miller



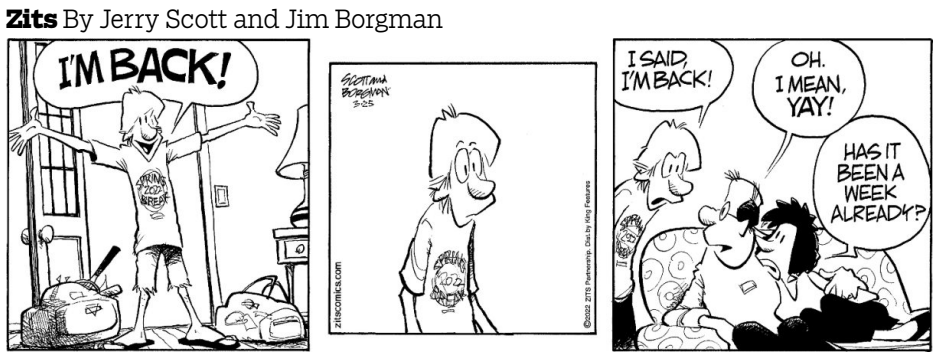
Curtis By Ray Billingsley



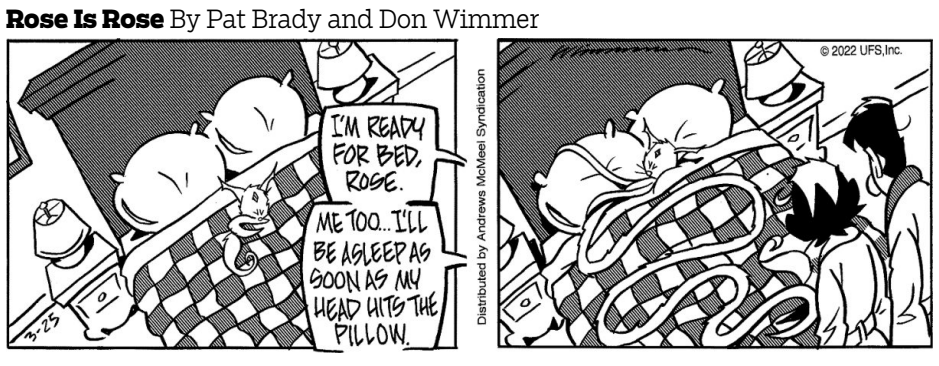
Pickles By Brian Crane



Zits By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



Rose Is Rose By Pat Brady and Don Wimmer



Mother Goose And Grimm By Mike Peters



CROSSWORD

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Across

1 Earth, for one
4 Dred Scott decision Chief Justice
9 Leg section
13 Two-digit sign
14 Thrifty to begin with?
15 Central Plains tribe
16 "__ la vie"
17 *Guide for Smithsonian visitors, say
19 Food scrap
20 Hardly libertine
21 Pithy saying
22 *Ken Burns specialty
26 Fairy tale figures
27 Mother __
28 Money with hits
29 Retreats
31 Word with bonds or games
34 Line holder
35 Barely detectable
36 Tiny particle
37 Future H.S. grads, probably
38 Volcanic eruption sight
39 Nested supermarket array
40 Nana
41 "Amen to that!"
42 *Southeast Asian colonial region dismantled in 1954
45 Earth's volume?
47 Mandlikova of '80s tennis
48 Mexican pinch?
49 Classic Looney Tunes tagline offering some "direction" in solving the starred clues
51 Office figure
52 Legends and such
53 Cloth-dyeing method
54 Pro using a siren, perhaps
55 Went after, in a way
56 Objects of worship
57 Earth opening?

Down

1 With 3-Down, sportsbook option based on the final score
2 Game system turnoff options
3 See 1-Down
4 What a siren does
5 Lexus competitor
6 Polite denial
7 Combat demarcation point
8 "__ busy?"
9 Indulge
10 Starting players
11 Sleep-inducing, maybe, as a lecture
12 Fancy party
16 Eccentric old guys
18 "Downton Abbey" personnel
23 Man's name that becomes a measurement when one letter is moved
24 Once called
25 The Alamo, e.g.
29 Starting point of many modern missions
30 Intention
31 Unsettling
32 Puts in sync with
33 Zips again, as a Ziploc bag
35 Rich dessert
36 Subject with shapes
38 First Amendment concern
39 Fish-and-chips fish
40 Like Romano, often
41 Chips, say
42 Emergency device
43 Couldn't not
44 How tuna may be packed
45 Hole makers
46 "O Julius Caesar, __ art mighty yet!": Brutus
50 Where, to Brutus
51 Entreat

By Jeffrey Wechsler — Tribune Content Agency 3/25/22

BRIDGE

BY STEVE BECKER

Bidding quiz

You are South, and the bidding has gone:

North	East	South	West
1 [H]	Pass	2 [C]	Pass
2 [H]	Pass	2 [S]	Pass
2 NT	Pass	?	

What would you bid now with each of the following four hands?

1. [S] AJ97 [H] 52 [D] J8 [C] KQ843
2. [S] AJ865 [H] 10 [D] 5 [C] AQ9852
3. [S] KJ92 [H] Q84 [D] 7 [C] AK763
4. [S] KQ74 [H] K7 [D] 2 [C] AJ9654

* * *

1. Pass. There comes a time when you've shown all your values and there's nothing further to show. True, partner opened the bidding, but he has now signed off twice opposite your two forcing bids. Obviously, he must have a dead-minimum opening bid. He presumably would have shown more interest in game (such as bidding three notrump instead of two) if he had more than a dead minimum. Since you have no values beyond those already indicated, it's high time to put a stop to the proceedings.

Another way to approach the situation is to apply the general principle that it normally takes at least an opening bid to make a game opposite a minimum opening bid. Partner seems to have a minimum, and you have less than an opening bid, so the combined total comes to less than game.

2. Three spades. The purpose of this bid is to tell partner that you have 6-5 distribution. Partner knows you would not repeat your spades with only a four-card suit, so he will credit you with five spades. At the same time, he will realize that you must have at least six clubs, since you would have bid spades first with five of each suit.

3. Four hearts. Game is certain despite partner's two weak rebids. However, there's still a good chance for slam, and you can suggest this by jumping to four hearts, implying extra values while at the same time completing the description of your 4-3-1-5 distribution.

4. Three hearts. It is still not clear whether the best game contract lies in hearts, notrump or clubs. The best way of pinpointing your shortage in diamonds is by now showing heart support, which, in conjunction with your two previous bids, should make it easier for partner to choose the best final contract.

Ordinarily, K-x is not adequate support for a suit partner has rebid only once, since the rebid might occasionally be based on only five cards. But in the great majority of cases, partner is far more likely to have a six-card suit, so a trial bid of three hearts (forcing) is clearly the best choice at this point.

Tomorrow: How to make tricks without straw.

JUMBLE

BY DAVID HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NOERP

WHYOD

DNUENO

TUNARO



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: MONEY TEASE INDICT PROPER
Answer: Everyone was ready. The baptism ceremony was going to start — "RITE" ON TIME

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TODAY'S SUDOKU

	5							
8			1		4		6	
2		9	5					8
	2				1			
	1	3				2	7	
			6				4	
5					3	1		
	6		2					9
9							5	

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit **www.sudoku.org.uk**

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

1	3	7	9	6	5	8	4	2
4	8	2	3	7	1	6	5	9
6	5	9	4	2	8	1	3	7
8	6	5	7	4	2	3	9	1
3	7	4	1	9	6	2	8	5
2	9	1	8	5	3	4	7	6
7	2	6	5	3	4	9	1	8
9	4	8	2	1	7	5	6	3
5	1	3	6	8	9	7	2	4

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Y	A	N	K		A	T	I	T		O	W	E	T	O
O	B	O	E		B	R	A	E		S	O	Y	U	Z
K	I	D	A	R	O	U	N	D		K	N	E	E	S
E	D	S		E	V	E		L	S	A	T	S		
L	E	T	O	N	E	S	H	A	I	R	D	O	W	N
	S	O	P			T	E	S	T		O	N	E	G
			A	D	D		A	S	A	P		M	A	O
	C	O	L	O	R	A	D	O	R	I	V	E	R	
M	A	V		H	E	R	O		S	N	L			
C	L	E	F		A	M	F	M				A	G	O
A	F	R	A	I	D	O	F	T	H	E	D	A	R	K
		P	E	P	S	I		N	A	G		Y	E	A
O	H	A	R	A		R	A	D	I	O	E	D	I	T
L	U	C	I	D		E	V	E	L		L	A	D	E
D	E	K	E	S		S	E	W	S		F	R	A	Y



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Hartford Courant
SPORTS
COURANT.COM/SPORTS

RED SOX

Martinez expected to see time in outfield

By Steve Hewitt
Boston Herald

FORT MYERS, Fla. — Expect J.D. Martinez to play plenty of outfield for the Red Sox this season.

That seems to be manager Alex Cora's intention at least right now. With Alex Verdugo and Kiké Hernandez seemingly locked in to play left and center field every day, it looks like the Red Sox will go with something of a platoon in right field, with Jackie Bradley Jr. starting against right-handed pitchers and Martinez against lefties.

Martinez's offensive numbers dipped last season when he played the outfield, but Cora attributed that to his high usage.

"Last year we ran him in the ground but it was because of where we were roster-wise," Cora said. "I'm not worried about that (offensive dip). He knows already that most likely against lefties, he's going to play a lot of outfield."

Cora is comfortable with playing Martinez in right field at Fenway Park, where there's more ground to cover.

"We feel like we put him in the spot and he makes the play," Cora said. "Trying to avoid moving people around, and Dugie feels very comfortable playing left field, so if he has to play right field, he'll play right field."

Story to debut: Trevor Story

Turn to Sox, Page 2

YANKEES

Chapman among biggest question marks after erratic 2021 season

By Kristie Ackert
New York Daily News

TAMPA, Fla. — Aroldis Chapman still strikes fear in hitters. The Yankees' fireball-throwing closer still touches 100-plus miles an hour with his fastball. He was still among the best in the majors at striking hitters out last season and recorded 30 saves.

But the 34-year-old is coming off one of the worst seasons of his career in 2021 and going into the final year on his contract with the Yankees with questions hanging over him.

Chapman finished with a 3.36 ERA (the second-highest of his career) and allowed nine home runs, the most he has allowed in an MLB season. He also had one of the worst walk rates (15.6%) of any pitcher in baseball and hitters had the highest hard-contact rate off Chapman in his career.

Yet one thing the Cuban native has carried throughout his career — because every good closer has to — is the ability to to turn the page on bad days. In this case bad seasons. So when the Yankees were eliminated from the postseason by the Red Sox last October, Chapman was confident enough in himself and his abilities and went

Turn to Yankees, Page 2



UConn's Christyn Williams is featured on Whistle's latest episode of "No Days Off." **CLOE POISSON/ SPECIAL TO THE COURANT**

UCONN WOMEN'S BASKETBALL NCAA TOURNAMENT

Beyond the basket

Williams talks about training, goals and Auriemma's influence in 'No Days Off' series

By Dom Amore
Hartford Courant

UConn women's basketball star Christyn Williams describes her training, her goals and her Arkansas roots in a 7-minute video for Whistle's newest episode of "No Days Off."

"The biggest thing I've learned from Coach [Geno Auriemma] is how to do more things than just score," Williams says. "I love to score the ball, but he taught me how to do other things on the court to impact the game positively. So when my shots isn't falling, I can still impact the game."

The docuseries profiles young athletes as they train with their support systems.

Turn to Williams, Page 4

Up next

UConn vs. Indiana
2 p.m. Sat., ESPN

INSIDE
■ Top-seeded South Carolina leans on its defense. **Page 3**
■ Tennessee back in the Sweet 16 for first time in six years. **Page 3**
■ Women's bracket. **Page 3**
■ Capsule previews for the Bridgeport Regional. **Page 4**

NCAA TOURNAMENT VILLANOVA 63, MICHIGAN 55



Villanova forward Jermaine Samuels, right, celebrates with guard Collin Gillespie during the second half against Michigan in the Sweet 16 round of the NCAA Tournament on Thursday in San Antonio. **DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP**

Forward, March!

Samuels piles up 22 points, helps shut down Michigan's Dickinson as Wildcats advance

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Jermaine Samuels scored 22 points and Villanova controlled Michigan and center Hunter Dickinson to earn a 63-55 Sweet 16 victory over the Wolverines on Thursday night in the NCAA Tournament.

Samuels' 8-of-13 shooting performance, much of it coming on tough drives through Michigan defenders and around Dickinson, carried a Wildcats offense that had long stretches of misfiring on 3-pointers.

The second-seeded Wildcats (28-7) advance to the South Region final to play the winner of Thursday night's matchup between top-seed Arizona (33-3) and No. 5 Houston (31-5).

Villanova twice led by nine in the second half only to see the Wolverines match their 3-point shooting in spurts and make it a contest. Guard Eli Brooks kept rescuing Michigan with 3-pointers, making 3 of 5. One of Brooks' treys, plus two free throws from Terrance Williams II, had the Wolverines within 54-50 with just over 3 minutes left.

But after Dickinson, who led the Wolverines with 15 points and 15 rebounds, missed near the basket, Samuels blew by him on the other end for a layup. Collin Gillespie followed it with a 3-pointer — his fourth of the game— from the left wing to make it 59-50 with 1:52 to play.

That was the cushion the Wildcats needed, as Michigan closed within six points before Samuels made four three throws over the final 13 seconds to put it away.

Defensively, Villanova refused to yield space under the basket to the 7-foot-1 Dickinson, who came in averaging 24 points in Michigan's two NCAA Tournament wins.

Justin Moore scored 15 points and Gillespie scored 12 for Villanova.

Michigan guard DeVante' Jones started 32 games this season but missed the Wolverines' first-round game against Colorado State because of concussion protocols, and was held out of the second half of the second-round win over Tennessee when his symptoms returned.

Jones scored seven and had five rebounds also left the game briefly

Turn to Villanova, Page 4

SWEET 16 AT A GLANCE

Tonight's games

Saint Peter's vs. Purdue
7:09 p.m., CBS

Providence vs. Kansas
7:29 p.m., TBS

North Carolina vs. UCLA
9:39 p.m., CBS

Iowa State vs. Miami
9:59 p.m., TBS

INSIDE
■ Arkansas stuns top overall seed Gonzaga 74-68 to advance to Elite Eight. **Page 4**
■ Capsule previews for Friday's games. **Page 5**



Safety Tip of the Day

If you are drowsy while driving - pull safely off the road and take a break. Drowsy driving kills.

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SPORTS

UP NEXT

UConn WBB: NCAA Sweet 16 vs. Indiana, Saturday, 2 p.m.; NCAA Elite Eight (if necessary) vs. Notre Dame/NC State, Monday, time TBD; NCAA Final Four (if necessary) vs. TBD, April 1, time TBD
Celtics: Timberwolves, Sunday, 6 p.m.; at Raptors, Monday, 7:30 p.m.; Heat, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Knicks: at Heat, Friday, 8 p.m.; at Pistons, Sunday, 3:30 p.m.; Bulls, Monday, 7:30 p.m.
Nets: at Heat, Saturday, 8 p.m.; Hornets, Sunday, 7:30 p.m.; Pistons, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.
Bruins: Islanders, Saturday, 12:30 p.m.; Maple Leafs, Tuesday, 7 p.m.; Devils, Thursday, 7 p.m.
Rangers: Penguins, Friday, 7 p.m.; Sabres, Sunday, 5 p.m.; at Penguins, Tuesday, 7 p.m.
Wolf Pack: Springfield, Friday, 7 p.m.; Hershey, Saturday, 7 p.m.; Utica, Monday, 7 p.m.

TV/RADIO

AUTO RACING
9:55 a.m.: Formula 1 Racing Saudi Arabia Grand Prix, practices. (Live) ESPN2
BASEBALL
1 p.m.: Tigers at Blue Jays. (Live) SPRTNET
1 p.m.: Yankees at Phillies. (Live) MLB
4 p.m.: Angels at Diamondbacks. (Live) MLB
7 p.m.: Duke at Florida State. (Live) ACC
7 p.m.: LSU at Florida. (Live) SEC
7 p.m.: North Carolina at Miami. (Live) NESN
9 p.m.: Padres at Dodgers. (Live) MLB
BASKETBALL
7 p.m.: NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament : Saint Peter's vs Purdue. (Live) CBS
7 p.m.: NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament: North Carolina vs South Carolina. (Live) ESPN
7 p.m.: NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament: Ohio State vs Texas. (Live) ESPN2
7:30 p.m.: Warriors at Hawks. (Live) NBA
7:30 p.m.: NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament: Providence vs Kansas. (Live) TBS
8 p.m.: Knicks at Heat. (Live), MSG
9:30 p.m.: NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament North Carolina vs UCLA. (Live) CBS
9:30 p.m.: NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament: Maryland vs Stanford. (Live) ESPN
9:30 p.m.: NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament: Creighton vs Iowa State. (Live) ESPN2
10 p.m.: NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament: Iowa State vs Miami. (Live) TBS
10:30 p.m.: 76ers at Los Clippers. (Live) NBA
GOLF
7 a.m.: DP World Tour Golf Commercial Bank Qatar Masters, Second Round. (Live) GOLF
10:30 a.m.: Corales Puntacana Championship, Second Round. (Live) GOLF
2 p.m.: WGC - Dell Technologies Match Play, Day 3. (Live) GOLF
HOCKEY
12 p.m.: NCAA Tournament, First Round: Northeastern vs Western Michigan. (Live) ESPNU
3 p.m.: NCAA Tournament, First Round: American International vs Michigan. (Live) ESPNU
6 p.m.: NCAA Tournament, First Round: Massachusetts vs Minnesota. (Live) ESPNU
7 p.m.: Penguins at Rangers. (Live), MSGPlus, NHL
SKATING
1 p.m.: Figure Skating ISU World Championships, Women's Short Program. (Live) USA
3 p.m.: Figure Skating ISU World Championships, Women's Free. (Live) USA
SOCCER
4 p.m.: International Friendly: France vs Ivory Coast. (Live) ESPN2
SOFTBALL
5 p.m.: Syracuse at Georgia Tech. (Live) ACC
9 p.m.: Missouri at Ole Miss. (Live) ESPNU
TENNIS
11 a.m.: ATP/WTA Tennis Miami Open, ATP 2nd Round, WTA 2nd Round. (Live) TENNIS

YANKEES

Frazier says he hid concussion from team in 2020

By Matthew Roberson
New York Daily News

While he's no longer part of the organization, Clint Frazier is still finding ways to make Yankee news.

The 27-year-old Cub, who was designated for assignment and eventually released by the Yankees in November, told reporters in Chicago that he did not tell the Yankees that he suffered a concussion in 2020 after crashing into the outfield wall. That was Frazier's second concussion, and by his account, the one that had the greatest negative effect on both his baseball abilities and everyday life.

"It was basically like a hangover every day," Frazier said in an NBC Sports Chicago interview. "Except I felt slowed down, one step behind. He went on to say that he kept things private because, "I knew what would happen if I didn't play."

The second concussion happened in a September 2020 game against the Blue Jays, and in the Yankees' Wild Card series against Cleveland that fall, Frazier only made one plate appearance. In the subsequent Division Series with the Rays, Frazier again found himself behind the eight ball, losing playing time to Brett Gardner. Though he hit a home run in one of his seven at-bats vs. Tampa Bay, Frazier was still dealing with the impact of his secretive condition.

"I obviously kept certain things to myself in 2020," he said. "They weren't really made aware until I pulled myself from that game in 2021."

That game in question came on June 30. That was the last time Frazier played in the big leagues, as he went on the injured list with what the Yankees initially called vertigo. The whole saga continued to play out in bizarre fashion, first with team doctors ruling out vertigo in favor of general blurred vision and dizziness, then sending Frazier to see multiple specialists that didn't seem to help. He'd play three August rehab games in the minor leagues before officially being shut down for the rest of the season.

"I don't think people really understand what it's like until you experience it yourself," Frazier said of his head injuries. "People would say, 'Oh, he's just having a headache.' It's not a headache. Your quality of life is certainly hindered whenever you go through a brain injury."

As of Thursday morning, Frazier is 3-for-8 in his first spring training action with the Cubs. He's walked three times and made a charging, sliding catch along the foul line, both signs that his depth perception and ability to read pitches are in somewhat good shape again.

When the Yankees' 2021 season ended, Frazier tweeted that he'd "have the opportunity to talk about this situation publicly and probably plan to do so soon." That opportunity came this week with the revelation that he concussed himself and did not tell anyone. Frazier is competing for playing time in a crowded Chicago outfield, which now includes Japanese free agent Seiya Suzuki.

RED SOX NOTES

How Verdugo has had to adjust getting his swing ready for season

By Julian McWilliams
Boston Globe

FORT MYERS, Fla. — Alex Verdugo was never one who cared for taking batting practice on the field.

The Red Sox outfielder would much rather hone his craft in the batting cage, noting that when he takes his hacks on the field he can sometimes get too big with his swing. The cage allows him to stay square to the baseball, working up the middle. Verdugo said that tracking how far the ball travels can sometimes play into his mind, getting him away from his approach.

But the Red Sox and Verdugo reached some middle ground entering this spring, convincing Verdugo that there's value in seeing the flight of the ball. The ball, in some sense, is your direct feedback.

"He's working on a few things. And, you know, I think we changed his routine a little bit," manager Alex Cora said before the Sox' exhibition game against the Orioles Thursday night in Sarasota. "He understands hitting on the field is important. Just going out there, moving around and seeing the flight of the ball. He's still putting work in the [cages], too. But I think it's been more of a give and take."

In a normal year, Verdugo works through his progression slowly. But when you consider the shortened spring training and how the regular season is less than two weeks away, he's had to make adjustments to his routine. The first couple of exhibition games he played, he thought strictly about mechanics, but since then he's had to ramp up the competitive aspect of the game.

"I'm not thinking about [expletive] when I hit no more," Verdugo said. "I'm just thinking about see the ball, hit the ball. Whatever my body does, I'll take a look at the video after and we'll assess that. But for me, the biggest thing now is just get as many at-bats as I can."

Verdugo did not travel to Sarasota on Thursday. Instead, he played in an exhibition game at JetBlue Park. The main component Verdugo has been working on is getting his timing back, much like every hitter during the spring. Right now, he says he's out in front on offspeed pitches and late on fastballs. Fixing that comes with reps, which includes batting practice on the field.

"When the season breaks, I won't be hitting BP on the field every day." Verdugo said. "But for spring training, I need to get the reps in, I need to swing, and you know, it's good for me to see the ball fly and kind of go off certain cues on the field."

Outfield plan: The regular starting outfield this spring has been Verdugo in left, Kiké Hernández in center, and Jackie Bradley Jr. in right. During the season, Bradley will likely sit against lefthanders. That's when the Sox will play J.D. Martinez in right field, Cora said, at least initially.

"J.D. will play the outfield," Cora said. "He's going to help us. And that way I can give Xander [Bogaerts] and Rafael [Devers] a few days at designated hitter against lefties. Even Trevor [Story]."

Story gets started: Story had four plate appearances Thursday in the Single A game played at Fenway South, drawing a walk and striking out three times. He saw 19 pitches.

Christian Vazquez also played in that game, going 1 for 2 with a home run and two walks.

Story is scheduled to play in another minor league game on Friday, then play in the major league game against the Rays on Saturday afternoon at JetBlue Park.



The Red Sox's Alex Verdugo reacts after hitting a single during the 10th inning against the Rays during Game 3 of the ALDS on Oct. 10 in Boston. **CHARLES KRUPA/AP**

Sox

from Page 1

is expected to make his Grapefruit League debut on Saturday against the Rays at JetBlue Park. He played in a minor league game on the back fields Thursday and will hit there again Friday before Saturday.

The start of the week had been a whirlwind for Story, but he came in early Thursday to figure out a plan going forward.

"(Wednesday) was fast for us," Cora said. "He came in and he texted me last night what he wanted to do. We sat down today and we mapped it out. Hopefully by Saturday he'll get some at-bats, then Sunday he'll get some at-bats on the backfield and we'll go from there."

28th man?

According to a report from the New York Post earlier this week, MLB and the MLBPA made a tentative agreement to expand rosters to 28 players through May 1 to make up for a shortened spring training.

That's welcome news for Cora, but he doesn't quite know yet how that will shake out for the Red Sox.

"We have no idea right now. We have no clue," Cora said. "Right now, we found out yesterday or two days ago and now we have to see where we're at. But it's a lot of players. It's great, it's good, but that's why I always wait for the rules of the tournament to be out there and see what we can do. You can carry an extra pitcher, but we have two off days. We're going to platoon one spot in the lineup, so you might need a right-handed hitter, a left-handed outfielder. It all depends where we go." ...

The Red Sox made a roster move Thursday, claiming right-handed pitcher Ralph Garza from the Twins and designating righty Kyle Tyler for assignment. The 27-year-old Garza made his major league debut last season and posted a 3.56 ERA in 30 ⅓ innings between the Astros and Twins.

YANKEES NOTES

Good start for Garcia an encouraging sign

By Kristie Ackert
New York Daily News

TAMPA, Fla. — Deivi Garcia looked like himself again. The young right-hander who had rocketed through the Yankees' minor league system and burst onto the major league scene in 2020, may have put himself back in the mix for a chance to pitch in the big leagues again.

After Garcia pitched two scoreless innings Wednesday night, Aaron Boone said that he looked more confident and more like he was in 2020. Garcia was just happy to find some success to start the spring.

"You always want to have a good outcome. So like, when you go out there, you compete and it's the outcome you're expecting, you're always going to get more confidence. You're going to feel good about yourself," Garcia said. "So definitely a good way to start."

With the lockout-shortened spring training, teams are anticipating slowly ramping their pitchers up into the regular season and the potential for injuries. Pitching depth will be at a premium and the Yankees could really use Garcia to take another step forward in his progress. That also goes for Clarke Schmidt, who pitched two scoreless in the Yankees 5-3 loss to the Tigers in Lakeland Thursday.

Another versatile piece: Marwin Gonzalez was scheduled to make his Yankees spring training debut Thursday in Lakeland. The super-utility man can play every defensive position except catcher and the outfield. Gonzalez, here on a minor league contract, could be one of the benefactors of an expanded April roster and nab one of the four bench spots.

"If you don't think so, then you stay home," Gonzalez said of his expectation of making the big league club. "Yeah, you have to come with that mentality or you lose right away."

Gonzalez homered Thursday.

The Yankees love the versatility that DJ LeMahieu has brought them the last three seasons and think flexibility helps make them a roster that "fits" together better.

Yankees

from Page 1

right back to his offseason routine.

"No, nothing in particular stands out. More about just keeping up my routine, my offseason routine, making sure that I'm on track once I arrive," Chapman said through Yankee interpreter Marlon Abreu.

The Yankees will get a chance to see if he is on the right track Friday. Chapman is scheduled to make his spring training debut in a game against the Phillies in Clearwater.

The Yankees bullpen comes into this season already missing Zack Britton, who until he struggled with arm injuries last year was seen as insurance for Chapman. Without Britton, who is hoping to get back at the end of the year after Tommy John surgery in September, they need Chapman to be dominant again or they will have to consider using Jonathan Loaisiga in that role. The one-time multiple inning right-hander blossomed into a late-inning weapon last season, earning his first five big league saves.

That opportunity for Loaisiga to close games came as Boone wanted Chapman to have time to recover his form last season. It was two diametrically opposed halves of the season for Chapman.

After an All-Star worthy start to the 2021 season, Chapman started having trouble commanding his fastball in June. Chapman adamantly denied any correlation, but it was around the same time MLB began cracking down on illegal foreign substances that pitchers used to get better grips on the baseball. Boone gave Loaisiga chances to close as Chapman worked to find his fastball command.

Over the final 10 games of last season, he seemed to be settling back into his role. And Chapman has earned his place as the Yankees closer.

The seven-time All-Star has 306 career saves and isn't going to let one half-season struggling with command deter him.

"Especially my position, being closer for a team, you mentality has to be very strong. We've got to understand that besides the work — there's always work and it's continuous and you've seen it you see the kind of work that I usually take part in — but besides that it's the mentality," Chapman said. "The concentration is always striving to be better. Not only on the field, but as a person too, if you're able to do that and take that on year by year, I think it's what gives you longevity and gives you a sense of accomplishment throughout your years."

METS

Players applaud decision to lift shot mandate

By Deesha Thosar
New York Daily News

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. — Mayor Eric Adams gained some critics with his controversial decision regarding New York City's vaccine mandate. But he won't find any of that backlash in the Mets clubhouse.

"It's a good day for our fans and the city of New York," said Mets manager Buck Showalter.

At least a couple of Mets players applauded Hizzoner after he announced on Thursday at Citi Field that unvaccinated athletes and performers are exempt from the city's vaccine mandate. Adams' decision immediately impacts the Nets, as Kyrie Irving, who is unvaccinated, will be able to help Brooklyn at home in a playoff push. For the Mets, unvaccinated players will be able to play at home beginning April 15.

"When it comes to Eric Adams, he shows a lot of leadership," said Mets shortstop Francisco Lindor, who is vaccinated. "He listened to the people, and that's what it's all about. When you reign, you gotta listen to the people and then make the decision yourself. Doing that shows a lot of character."

Mets outfielder Brandon Nimmo echoed Lindor in his approval of Adams' decision.

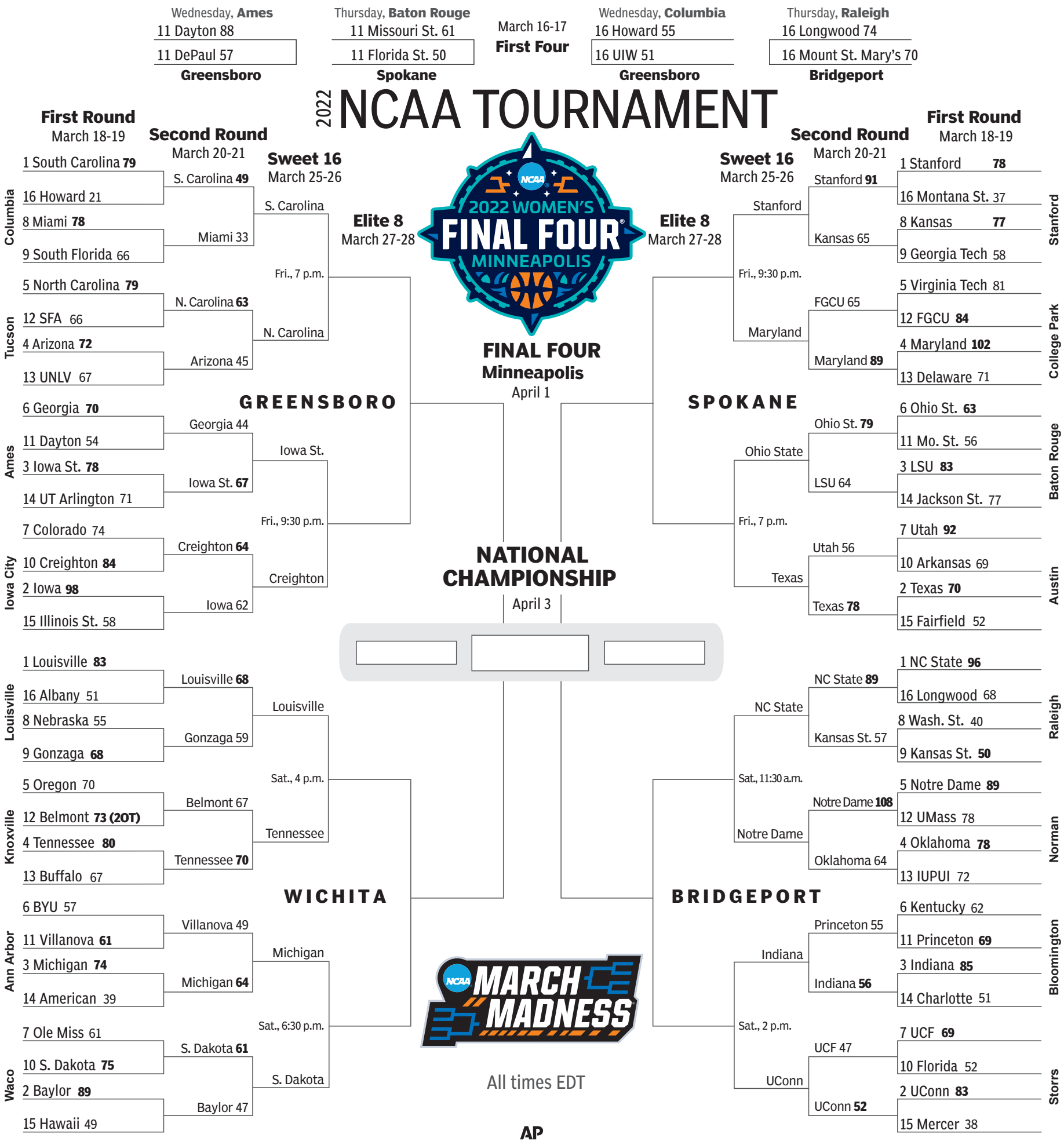
"I'm excited for all the fans of all New York teams—the Mets, the Yankees, the Nets," Nimmo said. "Obviously, good for Kyrie to be able to play again for his team at home, and for all the performers as well to be able to come in. So I think ultimately we're very thankful for the Mayor for his leadership, for being able to bring something I think is really good and positive back to New York City."

When asked whether Adams' decision poses as a double-standard for city workers who are unvaccinated and out of jobs, Lindor indicated the Mayor was placed in a difficult position.

"It's really hard to please everybody," Lindor said. "Especially how tough [COVID-19] was on New Yorkers. There was a lot of death and I'm sure there is still a lot of PTSD. So it's tough for Adams to please everybody. I'm not in his shoes, but I appreciate that we are focusing on playing baseball. And I hope this is best for the city, the state, everything. This puts us in a better spot."

The mandate, which was put into place in December by the Bill de Blasio administration, stated that all private employers require their employees to be vaccinated if they're going to work in-person.

NCAA WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT



GREENSBORO REGIONAL

'Defense is a decision'

No. 1 South Carolina takes its commitment to that side of ball to new, historic levels

Associated Press

GREENSBORO, N.C. — No. 1 South Carolina has leaned heavily on its defense in the women's NCAA Tournament.

There's no option, Gamecocks coach Dawn Staley said, if her players want to stay on the floor and South Carolina wants to keep advancing.

"They know they're going to have play defense," Staley explained, "or else the likelihood of them playing a whole lot is slim to none."

Message received.

The Gamecocks (31-2) were third in the country — and tops among the Power Five and Big East conferences — in fewest points allowed at 50.2 this season. They've taken it to history-making levels in the tournament.

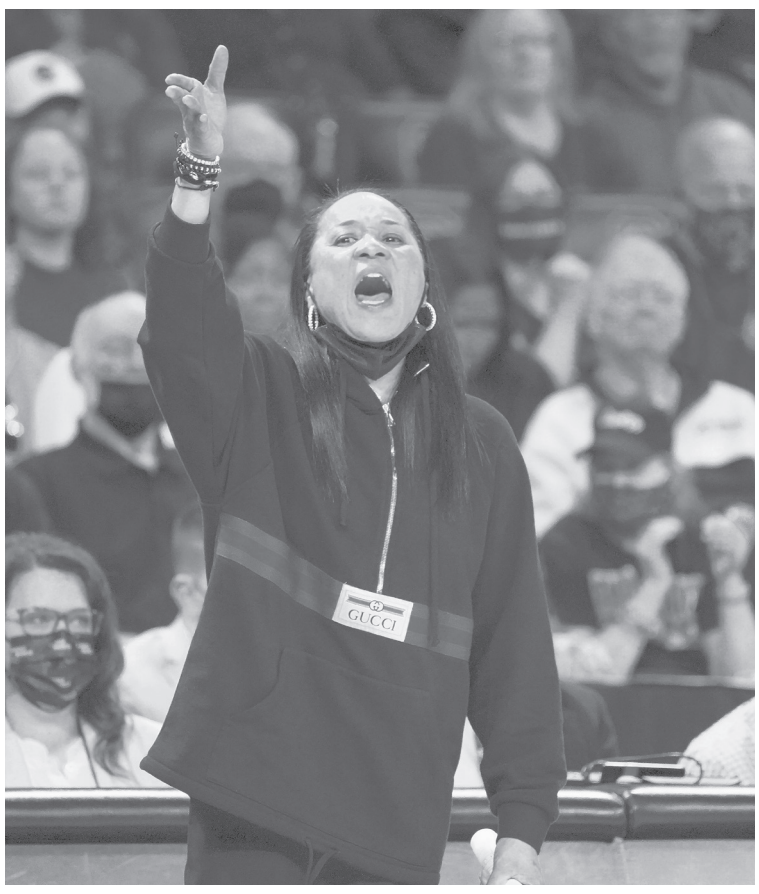
South Carolina, the event's overall top seed, limited to Howard to 21 points in an opening round game, the fewest points ever allowed in an NCAA Tournament game. The Gamecocks followed that by holding Miami to 33 points in the second round to reach their eighth straight Sweet 16.

Neither Howard nor Miami made a field goal in the second quarter against the Gamecocks.

Things ramp up in the Greensboro Region on Friday night with South Carolina going against fifth-seeded North Carolina (25-6), which was third in the Atlantic Coast Conference in scoring this season at 73.5 points a game.

"You need to be able to stop the other team in scoring," South Carolina All-American Aliyah Boston said. "So we take pride in that, making sure we're getting defensive stops."

Particularly when the Gamecocks' offense has struggled in recent games. They've shot 36% or less the past three games, including making 18 of 61 shots in the win over Miami last Sunday. Against Howard, South Carolina took 79 shots to score 79 points.



South Carolina head coach Dawn Staley communicates with players during the second half a second-round game against Miami in the NCAA Tournament on Sunday in Columbia, South Carolina. **SEAN RAYFORD/AP**

Defensive success is essential, Staley said, "because when we've shot the way we've shot the last two games, or four out of five, or whatever it is, you never know, you know?"

Defense has long been part of Staley's DNA. The former college national player of the year at Virginia 30 years ago, three-time Olympic gold medalist and fiery WNBA pro was a relentless defender.

She led the Cavaliers in steals all four of her seasons from 1989-92 and ranks second all-time in that category at the school with 454.

"I think defense is a decision," Staley said. "You're either going to do it or you're not."

South Carolina's done it this season with its dominant frontcourt.

The team led the country with 255 blocked shots and had three players among the nation's top 100 in that area — the 6-foot-5 Boston is eighth in the country with 85 blocks, 6-7 Kamilla Cardoso is 74th with 45 and 6-2 Victaria Saxton is 82nd with 44 blocks.

Staley's demanded defense since taking over a sagging program before the 2008-09 season. Only twice in the past 12 years have the Gamecocks given up more than 60 points a game.

South Carolina's has not wavered this season against the country's best teams. The Gamecocks allowed just 55 points a game and went 11-0 against ranked opponents. Their impressive performances includes wins over NCAA top seeds North Carolina State (66-57) in November and Stanford (65-61) in December.

Tar Heels coach Courtney Banghart has spent the week breaking down South Carolina's defense and found little room to move. She said the Gamecocks post players are picking players up on the perimeter while their guards stick close and take away options for easy baskets.

"They're shrinking the court with their length, size, and physicality," Banghart said.

Staley said their junior class led by starters in Boston, Zia Cooke and Brea Beal came in two years ago eager to learn, defend and gain playing time.

"I think since we're older now, we know what it's all about to play defense," Cooke said. "It's just all coming together at this point."

WICHITA REGIONAL

Tennessee back in women's Sweet 16 after 6-year absence

Associated Press

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — The Tennessee Lady Vols seem poised to once again be a force in women's basketball after the storied program had fallen on some almost unimaginable hard times.

There have been early tournament exits, players transferring and a coach fired.

But a social media post captures the journey the Lady Vols have been on: It shows the late Pat Summitt hugging then-point guard Kellie Jolly celebrating Tennessee's third straight women's national championship and also features now-coach Kellie Harper enjoying the Lady Vols' first Sweet 16 berth in six years.

Harper is in her third season at her alma mater, which happens to be the only program to play in all 40 NCAA Tournaments and first to win eight national championships.

Harper said this is an important step on the road to making the Lady Vols a national contender and Final Four regular again.

"Obviously I think there is a big responsibility that I have and that our program has to a lot of different things," said Harper, one of only two coaches to lead four different programs to the NCAA Tournament. "To Pat's legacy for sure, to this community, our conference, and women's basketball, because I think when Tennessee is good, I think women's basketball is better."

A 70-67 win over Belmont on Monday night clinched Tennessee's 35th trip to the Sweet 16. The Lady Vols will play top-seeded Louisville on Saturday in the Wichita Regional semifinal in Wichita, Kansas.

Sweet 16s, Final Fours and national championship games used to be the norm at Tennessee with orange-decked fans following the Lady Vols all over the country. Under Summitt, the Lady Vols went to 18 Final Fours — not counting four in the AIAW before the NCAA started its tournament. They lost six national title games, four in the NCAA Tournament.

All that seems like distant memories.

The last Final Four appearance for Tennessee came in 2008 — the eighth and final national championship under Summitt.

Tennessee led the nation in attendance for 19 seasons and averaged at least 10,375 per game for 20 straight seasons. The Lady Vols haven't averaged 10,000 a game since 2015-16.

Fans who followed the Summitt show are older, and winning new fans means landing new stars to follow in the steps of Chamique Holdsclaw, Tamika Catchings and Candace Parker.

Holly Warlick, Summitt's trusted assistant, couldn't do it.

She lasted seven seasons before being fired in March 2019 after a first-round tournament loss. So Tennessee turned to Harper, fresh off taking Missouri State to a Sweet 16.

Harper has been boosting the talent on the roster. Justine Pissott, a 6-foot-4 guard from Toms River, New Jersey, and the 11th-ranked player in the country, is committed for next season.

When the Lady Vols climbed back into the top 10 of The Associated Press rankings in December, it was the first time they'd been there in nearly three years. They climbed as high as No. 4 and were projected in late January as the No. 1 seed in the Wichita Region.

Then came a slew of injuries.

Keyen Green, a glue player off the bench, tore an ACL. Then Jordan Horston, their leading scorer and rebounder, broke her left elbow in February. Tennessee had already lost sophomore Marta Suarez, an All-SEC freshman last season, in October.

"People who don't do this for a living can't understand how hard it is to lose players like they've lost players as consistently down the stretch of a season, where you've got to rework a lot of stuff," said Belmont coach Bart Brooks, praising Harper for not allowing the injuries to completely derail the season.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
Saturday: vs. Indiana, NCAA Sweet 16
2 p.m., ESPN

UCONN
COURANT.COM/SPORTS

COVERAGE PRESENTED BY
R&D RISCASSI & DAVIS P.C.
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Williams

from Page 1

The 21-year-old Williams details her daily routine at UConn, her idols in women's basketball — spoiler, they're mostly former Huskies in the WNBA — and how she got here.

"I have two brothers and three sisters and I'm the baby," Williams says. "They all grew up playing basketball, baseball, soccer, pretty much any sport you could imagine and I would try to keep up with them."

She also tackles a round of women's basketball trivia questions.

Williams, a 5-foot-11 guard, is UConn's top scorer who averages 14.5 points per game. Throughout her career, she has been known as a postseason performer as UConn continues its run in the NCAA women's basketball tournament. The No. 2-seeded Huskies next face No. 3 Indiana in Bridgeport Region semifinals at the Total Mortgage Arena on Saturday.

Athletes recently profiled on "No Days Off" include tennis player Coco Gauff, Red Sox prospect Blaze Jordan, the NBA's Cade Cunningham, the NFL's Najee Harris and golfer Rachel Heck.

"We chose to feature Christyn Williams in our original 'No Days Off' series, because she's one of the star players for the perennial powerhouse, UConn women's basketball team," said Whistle's Josh Millan, VP of media and talent partnerships. "Christyn is not only one of the best players, but she is a relatable senior leader who is projected to be a top WNBA draft pick."

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BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL AT A GLANCE

By Lori Riley | Hartford Courant

The No. 3 seed Indiana women will play the No. 2 seed UConn's women's basketball team for the first time, and former Big East foe and No. 5 seed Notre Dame and No. 1 North Carolina State will square off in an ACC rematch Saturday in the Bridgeport Region semifinals at Total Mortgage Center during the NCAA women's basketball tournament. Here are a few fun facts about the Bridgeport Regional and each team:

UConn

A little Bridgeport history: The Huskies have played in a Bridgeport Regional seven times and have only lost once, in 2006 in overtime in the regional final to Duke. They played four times in the regionals and three times in the first and second rounds. The Huskies were there in 2004 for the first and second rounds (and went on to win the national championship), 2006 (when they lost to the Blue Devils 63-61), 2008 (first and second rounds), 2012 (winning the first and second rounds), 2013 (they beat Kentucky in the regional final 83-53 and went on to win the national championship), 2016 (they beat Texas in the regional final, went 38-0 and won the national championship) and 2017 (they beat Oregon in the regional final but lost to Mississippi State in the Final Four).
The "curse" of the court: In 2006, Duke snapped UConn's 29-game in-state NCAA Tournament win streak. UConn was losing in regulation, but Mel Thomas sent the game into overtime with a jump shot with 20 seconds left to tie the score at 55. Charde Houston missed an open 6-footer with a few seconds left that would have tied the game again in overtime. The storyline then was that there was a curse on the actual basketball court, which had been repurposed from the 2001 Women's Final Four court at the Savvis Center in St. Louis, where Diana Taurasi infamously shot 1-for-15 and the Huskies lost to Notre Dame in the national semifinals.



Notre Dame coach Niele Ivey's son Jalen, a sophomore guard at Purdue, is also in the Sweet Sixteen. **ROBERT FRANKLIN/AP**

Indiana

A lot of firsts: It's hard to believe, but this is the first time Indiana and UConn have ever faced each other. Indiana also hosted its first NCAA Tournament games in the first and second rounds, but it is the Hoosiers' second trip to the Sweet 16.
How the Hoosiers got here: Indiana had to beat a team with a UConn connection to get to Bridgeport. The Hoosiers defeated Carla Berube's No. 11 Princeton Tigers 56-55 in the second round in front of 9,627, their third-biggest crowd at Assembly Hall. With Indiana up by a point, Ali Patberg stole the ball in the final seconds of the game and senior Aleksa Gulbe hit two free throws with a second left to give Indiana a 56-52 lead, and Princeton hit a 3-pointer for the final score. Indiana beat No. 14 Charlotte 85-41 in the first round.

Notre Dame

All in the family: Coach Niele Ivey's son Jalen is a 6-foot-4 sophomore guard for Purdue, whose team is also in the Sweet 16 on the men's side. Jalen had 18 points in the No. 3-seeded Boilermakers' 81-71 win over No. 6 Texas in the second round. Purdue will face Cinderella team St. Peter's Friday in the East Regional semifinals in Philadelphia.
Record-breaking performance: When No. 5 Notre Dame beat No. 4 Oklahoma 108-64 Monday in the second round in Norman, Oklahoma, the Irish became the first men's or women's team to beat a higher-seeded opponent by 40 or more points in the tournament. It was also the most points scored by a Notre Dame women's team in tournament history. Dara Mabrey had 17 of her season-high 29 points in the first quarter when Notre Dame led 35-12. Mabrey also went 7 for 12 from the 3-point line in the victory.
Turnaround: Notre Dame (24-8) went 10-10 last season in Ivey's first year as head coach and didn't make the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 25 years.

NC State

ACC foes: NC State, who won the ACC Tournament championship for the third straight time, has won 12 consecutive games, with its last loss coming on Feb. 1 to Notre Dame, 69-66. The two teams have never played each other in the NCAA Tournament.
Elite Eight: If the Wolfpack win on Saturday, they will make their first trip to the Elite Eight since 1998, when they beat UConn in the regional final in Dayton 60-52 for their first and only trip to the Women's Final Four.
MVP: Senior Elissa Cunane, NC State's 6-5 center, is the team's leading scorer (13.9 points per game) and rebounder (7.5) and was named the ACC Tournament MVP for the second year. She is the career leader in free throws (505) for the women's basketball program, shooting 83 percent from the line this season.

Lori Riley can be reached at lriley@courant.com.

NCAA TOURNAMENT ARKANSAS 74, GONZAGA 68

Sooie Sixteen



Arkansas' Davonte Davis, left, celebrates with Kamani Johnson after the Razorbacks defeated Gonzaga in the Sweet 16 round of the NCAA Tournament on Thursday in San Francisco. **MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ / AP**

Notae, Arkansas muscle top overall seed Gonzaga out of NCAAs

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — JD Notae scored 21 points despite missing 20 shots and fourth-seeded Arkansas made Gonzaga miserable on both ends of the floor, bouncing the top overall seed from the NCAA Tournament with a 74-68 win Thursday night.

Notae finished with six rebounds, six assists, three steals and two blocked shots for coach Eric Musselman's scrappy, hustling Razorbacks (28-8), who reached the Elite Eight for the second straight year and will face either Duke or Texas Tech in the West Region final Saturday.

Drew Timme scored 25 points but couldn't rally the Bulldogs (28-4), who for the second straight season were favored to win that elusive national title but were eliminated by a more physical foe. Coach Mark Few's squad was undefeated last year before falling to Baylor in the national title game.

Arkansas continually challenged 7-foot Gonzaga freshman Chet Holmgren in the paint, and the skinny NBA prospect fouled out with 3 minutes, 29 seconds remaining after some questionable calls went against him. Holmgren finished with 11 points, all in the second half, and 14 rebounds in what may be his final college game.

Moments after Au'Diese Toney dunked with one second left, Notae threw the game ball into the air in triumph as teammate Jaylin Williams flexed and roared near midcourt. Musselman, meanwhile, found mother Kris in the stands for an embrace as she watched him in person for the first time coaching the Razorbacks

Notae shot 9 of 29 overall and 2 of 12 from 3-point range but was still the catalyst for the Razorbacks. The senior guard's 3 with 6:38 left made it 59-50, and Arkansas held on from there.

Musselman's style of preparation seems to have paid off again. Last week in upstate New York, he took his team to Niagara Falls for an educational experience and nice break from the basketball grind.

Across the country now, the Razorbacks ventured out Wednesday to see the iconic sights of San Francisco — a cable car ride on the agenda, of course.

"It also helps me from overloading them," Musselman acknowledged. "If we're touring the city, it's one less film session, one less putting pressure on the guys. So I think it's healthy for us to do stuff like that."



Villanova guard Caleb Daniels, right, fouls Michigan forward Moussa Diabate during the second half of a Sweet 16 NCAA Tournament game on Thursday in San Antonio. **ERIC GAY/AP**

Villanova

from Page 1

in the second half when he fell hard to the floor chasing a loose ball.

Meanwhile the Wildcats have been launching 3-pointers all season and there was nothing to deter them when they weren't falling against the Wolverines. The Wildcats were 9 of 30 from long range — their ninth game this season with at least 30 attempts. The most was 50 in a win over Syracuse.

Did you know?

Only one in five teens believes texting impairs their ability to drive. Eighty percent believe it has no impact.

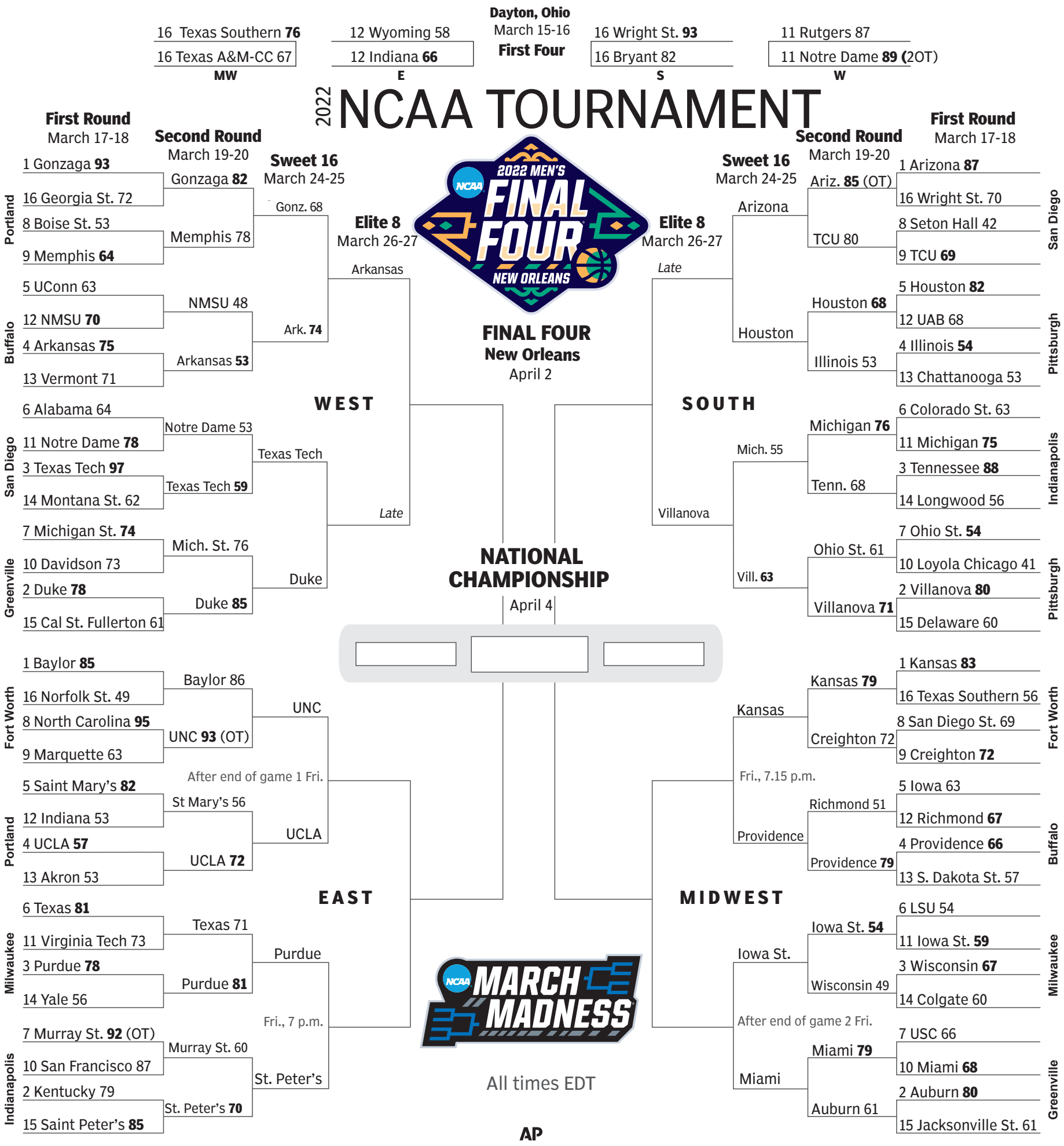


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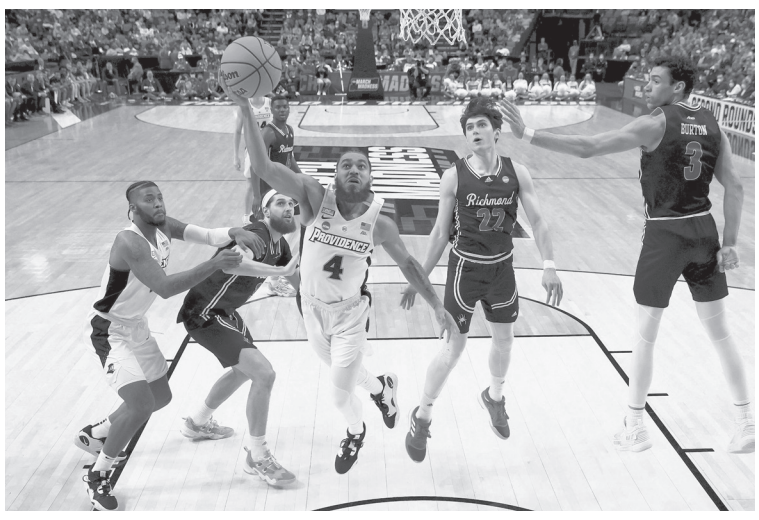
NCAA TOURNAMENT



SWEET 16 MIDWEST REGION

'Fortunate' Friars living in moment

By Kyle Hightower
Associated Press



Providence's Jared Bynum scores two of his 10 points during Providence's 79-51 victory over Richmond in the second round of the NCAA Tournament last week. The Friars face top-seeded Kansas on Friday night. **ELSA / GETTY**

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Providence coach Ed Cooley heard all the chatter following his team entering the NCAA Tournament.

It helped create a narrative about the Friars: that despite earning 25 victories and winning a Big East regular-season championship, they had simply been more lucky than good because of an 11-2 record in games decided by five points or fewer.

"The narrative on doubt and luck and this and that, yeah, it plays on you," Cooley said. "The players will come in the locker room and talk about it, and I tongue-in-cheek it a little bit, but, you know, you got some older guys out there just willing to try to compete for respect.

"I don't have to be liked, but I'll be damned if you're not going to respect me."

The Friars (27-5) used that as fuel as they held off South Dakota State and then blew past Richmond to advance to their first Sweet 16 since 1997.

Yet after limiting its first two opponents to just 54 points per game — the second-fewest allowed by the remaining teams — Providence again finds itself as an underdog as it prepares to meet top seed Kansas (30-6) on Friday with a spot in the Elite Eight on the line.

At this point, the tag of "Fortunate Friars" is a moniker Cooley and his veteran team don't mind claiming.

"The DNA in that locker room is trust, it's toughness, it's playing with an edge, playing with a chip," Cooley said. "We're still the team that was picked seventh (in the Big East). We're still the team that everybody talked about — well, this team didn't have this main guy, this team didn't have that one.

"We never talked about what we don't have. We appreciate what we do have. We know who we are, and you have to get lucky to advance in a lot of these games. It's tournament play. What I'm proud of our guys is we saved our best for the moment."

Providence arrives in Chicago as one of just two teams from the Big East remaining in the Big Dance, along with Villanova. The Wildcats faced Michigan on Thursday night but the game ended too late for this edition.

The Big 12 is tied with the ACC with three teams each in the final 16, with the Jayhawks joined by Texas Tech and Iowa State.

The Red Raiders are the lone common opponent between Providence and Kansas. The Friars beat them 72-68 in Providence in December. The Jayhawks lost their first matchup at Texas Tech in January before beating the Red Raiders in Kansas and again in the Big 12 championship game.

It's one of the reasons Kansas coach Bill Self is expecting his team to have its hands full. He's concerned about a veteran Friars roster that has five players who have attempted at least 100 3-pointers, with three shooting 38% or better.

"That makes you concerned that they're all capable and willing shooters, and if two of those five get hot, that's eight 3s right there," Self said. "So you've got to do a really good job defending the arc."

Cooley said he feels like the competitiveness in the Big East has been overlooked and that it has set the Friars up for this moment.

He's also leading a veteran group that features four graduate players (Nate Watson, Al Durham, Noah Horchler, Justin Minaya) and a senior (A.J. Reeves).

"Hopefully our best is still yet to come," Cooley said. "Our guys are just feisty. They're fun to be around. They're older, they know how to practice, they know how to go to the weight room, they know how to go to the film room. Their focus has been big-time."

Horchler, who's coming off a 16-point, 14-rebound performance against Richmond, said that while he and his teammates respect the "blue-blood" Jayhawks, they're embracing the chance they have this week to get Providence back to somewhere it hasn't been in 25 years.

"It's just an exciting time in our lives," he said. "This is what we've dreamed about since we were kids. We're just living in the moment."

Cooley and the Friars are also done trying to block out what outsiders are saying about them. They're content to live with being judged based on performance.

"I listen to that 'One Shining Moment' song every day," Cooley said. "It's real. There's goosebumps in me saying it as I speak.

"They wanted to be a tournament team, and the narrative in our locker room has been leave your mark, leave your legacy. That's something this group is doing and hopefully the mark is not cemented yet."

FRIDAY'S GAMES

No. 15 Saint Peter's (21-11) vs. No. 3 Purdue (29-7)

Where, when, TV: Philadelphia; 7:09 p.m. EDT; CBS
Bottom line: Purdue scores 79.8 points and has outscored opponents by 11.3 points per game. Saint Peter's ranked second in the MAAC, shooting 35.5% from 3-point range.
Top performers: Jaden Ivey is scoring 17.6 points per game and averaging 4.8 rebounds for the Boilermakers. Fousseyni Drame is averaging 6.9 points and 6.6 rebounds for the Peacocks.
Last 10 games: Boilermakers: 7-3, averaging 75 points, 41.1 rebounds, 12.4 assists, 5.4 steals and three blocks per game while shooting 44.4% from the field. Peacocks: 9-1, averaging 73 points, 32.2 rebounds, 14.1 assists, 3.7 steals and 5.5 blocks per game.

No. 4 Providence (27-5) vs. No. 1 Kansas (30-6)

Where, when, TV: Chicago; 7:29 p.m. EDT; TBS
Bottom line: Kansas ranked second in the Big 12 with 15.5 assists per game, led by Dajuan Harris averaging 4.3. Providence scores 71.8 points while outscoring opponents by 5.6 points per game.
Top performers: Ochai Agbaji is scoring 19.3 points per game and averaging 5.2 rebounds for the Jayhawks. Jared Bynum is averaging 12.6 points and 4.1 assists for the Friars.
Last 10 games: Jayhawks: 8-2, averaging 78.3 points, 37.8 rebounds, 15.6 assists, 6.9 steals and 3.6 blocks per game while shooting 45.4% from the field. Friars: 7-3, averaging 67.4 points, 35.3 rebounds, 12.1 assists, 5.4 steals and 1.8 blocks per game.

No. 8 North Carolina (26-9) vs. No. 4 UCLA (27-7)

Where, when, TV: Philadelphia; 9:39 p.m. EDT; CBS
Bottom line: UCLA ranked seventh in the Pac-12 in rebounding with 32.5 rebounds. Jaime Jaquez Jr. leads the Bruins with 5.7 boards. North Carolina was the ACC leader with 28 defensive rebounds per game, led by Armando Bacot averaging 8.7.
Top performers: Jaquez, who hopes to play despite an ankle injury, is averaging 14 points and 5.7 rebounds for the Bruins. Brady Manek is averaging 1.8 made 3-pointers over the last 10 games for North Carolina.
Last 10 games: Bruins: 8-2, averaging 68.4 points, 27 rebounds, 12.2 assists, 6.5 steals and three blocks per game. Tar Heels: 8-2, averaging 83.4 points, 40.7 rebounds, 21.7 assists, 5.2 steals, 3.8 blocks.

No. 11 Iowa State (22-12) vs. No. 10 Miami (25-10)

Where, when, TV: Chicago; 9:59 p.m. EDT; TBS
Bottom line: Miami was eighth in the ACC with 14.1 assists per game, led by Charlie Moore averaging 4.5. Iowa State ranked eighth in the Big 12 by scoring 26.3 points per game in the paint, led by Izaiah Brockington averaging 5.2.
Top performers: Jordan Miller is averaging 10.1 points, six rebounds and 1.8 steals for the Hurricanes. Brockington is scoring 17.1 points per game with 6.8 rebounds and 1.6 assists for the Cyclones.
Last 10 games: Hurricanes: 7-3, averaging 74.0 points, 28.4 rebounds, 16.1 assists, 9.2 steals and 3.9 blocks per game while shooting 46.9% from the field. Cyclones: 6-4, averaging 53 points, 27.3 rebounds, 13.3 assists, 9.5 steals and 2.1 blocks per game while shooting 35.4% from the field.

— Associated Press

SCOREBOARD

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA
Florida	62	42	14	6	90	254	180
Toronto	63	40	18	5	85	232	191
Tampa Bay	62	39	17	6	84	207	177
Boston	63	39	19	5	83	191	169
Detroit	63	26	30	7	59	184	235
Buffalo	64	23	33	8	54	171	223
Ottawa	63	22	36	5	49	162	207
Montreal	63	17	36	10	44	160	238
METRO.	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OT**	**PTS**	**GF**	**GA**
Carolina	63	42	15	6	90	206	150
Pittsburgh	65	39	16	10	88	213	172
N.Y. Rangers	64	40	19	5	85	193	167
Washington	65	35	20	10	80	216	185
Columbus	64	32	29	3	67	211	239
N.Y. Islanders	61	27	25	9	63	165	166
Philadelphia	63	20	32	11	51	159	220
New Jersey	64	23	36	5	51	197	233

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA
Colorado	64	45	14	5	95	245	178
St. Louis	62	35	18	9	79	222	175
Minnesota	61	37	20	4	78	228	196
Nashville	64	37	23	4	78	211	184
Dallas	62	35	24	3	73	184	185
Winnipeg	64	30	24	10	70	201	198
Chicago	64	23	32	9	55	171	221
Arizona	63	20	39	4	44	164	228
PACIFIC	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OT**	**PTS**	**GF**	**GA**
Calgary	63	38	17	8	84	218	153
Los Angeles	65	35	22	8	78	188	182
Edmonton	64	35	24	5	75	217	204
Vegas	66	34	28	4	72	205	201
Vancouver	65	31	26	8	70	186	187
Anaheim	66	27	28	11	65	188	214
San Jose	63	28	27	8	64	167	198
Seattle	64	20	38	6	46	168	228

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

THURSDAY'S RESULTS
Dallas at Carolina, late
Florida at Montreal, late
Tampa Bay at Boston, late
Detroit at N.Y. Islanders, late
Ottawa at Winnipeg, late
Philadelphia at St. Louis, late
Vancouver at Minnesota, late
San Jose at Edmonton, late
Chicago at Los Angeles, late
Nashville at Vegas, late

FRIDAY'S GAMES
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Rangers, 7p.m.
Washington at Buffalo, 7p.m.
Columbus at Winnipeg, 8p.m.
Arizona at Calgary, 9p.m.
Philadelphia at Colorado, 9p.m.

SATURDAY'S GAMES
N.Y. Islanders at Boston, 12:30p.m.
Tampa Bay at Detroit, 12:30p.m.
Chicago at Vegas, 3p.m.
Florida at Ottawa, 7p.m.
New Jersey at Washington, 7p.m.
Toronto at Montreal, 7p.m.
Vancouver at Dallas, 7p.m.
Carolina at St. Louis, 8p.m.
Columbus at Minnesota, 8p.m.
Edmonton at Calgary, 10p.m.
Anaheim at San Jose, 10:30p.m.
Seattle at Los Angeles, 10:30p.m.

SUNDAY'S GAMES
Tampa Bay at N.Y. Islanders, 2p.m.
Buffalo at N.Y. Rangers, 5p.m.
Detroit at Pittsburgh, 5p.m.
Colorado at Minnesota, 6p.m.
Philadelphia at Nashville, 6p.m.
Arizona at Winnipeg, 7p.m.
Florida at Toronto, 7p.m.
Montreal at New Jersey, 7p.m.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
Toronto 3, New Jersey 2
Buffalo 4, Pittsburgh 3, SO
Vancouver 3, Colorado 1
Chicago 4, Anaheim 2

TENNIS

MIAMI OPEN
At Hard Rock Stadium, Miami Gardens, Fla.; hardcourt-outdoors
MEN'S SINGLES, ROUND OF 128
Lloyd Harris d. Facundo Bagnis, 6-3, 6-3.
Ugo Humbert d. Aljaz Bedene, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.
Yoshihito Nishioka d. Emilio Gomez, 6-2, 6-7(2), 6-1.
Sebastian Korda d. Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, 6-1, 6-1.
Pedro Martinez d. Jan-Lennard Struff, 6-3, 2-0, ret.
Jeffrey John Wolf d. Daniel Altmaier, 6-4, 6-4.
Jenson Brooksby d. Federico Coria, 3-6, 6-2, 6-3.
Alexei Popyrin d. Lorenzo Musetti, 7-5, 7-6(5).
Jordan Thompson d. Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, 6-7(1), 6-4, 6-4.
Kamil Majchrzak d. Sebastian Baez, 6-4, 6-3.
Mikhail Kukushkin d. Botic Van De Zandschulp, 6-4, 6-4.
Arthur Rinderknech d. Laslo Djere, 6-2, 7-6(6).
Marton Fucsovics d. Marcos Giron, 6-3, 6-4.
Tommy Paul d. Benjamin Bonzi, 6-4, 6-4.
Andy Murray d. Federico Delbonis, 7-6(4), 6-1.
Miomir Kecmanovic vs. Jack Sock, late

WOMEN'S SINGLES, ROUND OF 64
#8 Ons Jabeur d. Magda Linette, 7-6(1), 6-2.
#9 Danielle Collins d. Anna Bondar, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4.
Naomi Osaka d. #13 Angelique Kerber, 6-2, 6-3.
Karolina Muchova d. #18 Leylah A. Fernandez, 6-4, 7-6(3).
Aliaksandra Sasnovich d. #25 Daria Kasatkina, 7-6(5), 6-4.
Alison Riske d. #31 Alize Cornet, 6-2, 6-2.
Kaia Kanepi d. Sara Sorribes Tormo, 3-6, 7-5, 6-0.
Lucia Bronzetti d. Stefanie Voegele, 6-2, 6-1.
Elina Svitolina d. Heather Watson, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6(4).
Katerina Siniakova d. Emma Raducanu, 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.
Daria Saville d. Harmony Tan, 6-4, 6-2.
Anna Kalinskaya d. Karolina Pliskova 6-3, 6-3.
Belinda Bencic d. Marta Kostyuk, 6-3, 6-1.
Vera Zvonareva d. Tamara Zidansek, 6-3, 6-2.
Ann Li vs. Anett Kontaveit, late
Aryna Sabalenka vs. Irina-Camelia Begu, late

ODDS

COLLEGE BASKETBALL — FRIDAY

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG
at Purdue	12½	Saint Peter's
at Kansas	7½	Providence
at UCLA	2	North Carolina
at Miami	2½	Iowa State
SATURDAY		
Southern Utah	4	Portland
MONDAY		
South Alabama	3½	Coastal Carolina
TUESDAY		
St. Bonaventure	1	Xavier
Texas A&M	1½	Washington State

WOMEN'S NCAA TOURNAMENT ODDS

South Carolina	6-5	UConn	3-1
Stanford	5-1	N.C. State	7-1
Louisville	12-1	Texas	25-1
Maryland	50-1	Michigan	50-1
North Carolina	50-1	Iowa State	66-1
Indiana	80-1	Tennessee	80-1
Notre Dame	100-1	Ohio State	250-1
S. Dakota	250-1	Creighton	300-1

NBA — FRIDAY

FAVORITE	LINE	O/U	UNDERDOG
at Detroit	2½	(218)	Washington
Utah	3½	(233)	at Charlotte
at Atlanta	2	(220)	Golden State
at Miami	5½	(off)	New York
at Minnesota	2	(228)	Dallas
Houston	2½	(off)	at Portland
Philadelphia	5½	(off)	at LA Clippers

NHL — FRIDAY

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG	LINE
Washington	-210	at Buffalo	+172
Pittsburgh	-125	at NY Rangers	+104
at Winnipeg	-205	Columbus	+168
at Calgary	-465	Arizona	+350
at Colorado	-410	Philadelphia	+315

For the latest odds, go to FanDuel Sportsbook, https://sportsbook.fanduel.com/

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC	W	L	PCT	GB
Philadelphia	45	27	.625	—
Boston	46	28	.622	—
Toronto	40	32	.556	5
Brooklyn	38	35	.521	7½
New York	31	42	.425	14½
SOUTHEAST	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
y-Miami	47	26	.644	—
Charlotte	37	36	.507	10
Atlanta	36	37	.493	11
Washington	30	41	.423	16
Orlando	20	54	.270	27½
CENTRAL	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
Milwaukee	45	27	.625	—
Chicago	42	30	.583	3
Cleveland	41	31	.569	4
Indiana	25	48	.342	20½
Detroit	20	53	.274	25½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

SOUTHWEST	W	L	PCT	GB
Memphis	50	23	.685	—
Dallas	45	28	.616	5
New Orleans	30	42	.417	19½
San Antonio	29	44	.397	21
Houston	18	55	.247	32
NORTHWEST	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
Utah	45	28	.616	—
Denver	43	30	.589	2
Minnesota	42	32	.568	3½
Portland	27	45	.375	17½
Oklahoma City	21	52	.288	24
PACIFIC	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
x-Phoenix	59	14	.808	—
Golden State	48	25	.658	11
L.A. Clippers	36	38	.486	23½
L.A. Lakers	31	42	.425	28
Sacramento	26	48	.351	33½

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

THURSDAY'S RESULTS
Cleveland at Toronto, late
Chicago at New Orleans, late
Indiana at Memphis, late
Washington at Milwaukee, late
Phoenix at Denver, late

FRIDAY'S GAMES
Utah at Charlotte, 7p.m.
Washington at Detroit, 7p.m.
Golden State at Atlanta, 7:30p.m.
Dallas at Minnesota, 8p.m.
New York at Miami, 8p.m.
Houston at Portland, 10p.m.
Philadelphia at L.A. Clippers, 10:30p.m.

SATURDAY'S GAMES
San Antonio at New Orleans, 5p.m.
Sacramento at Orlando, 7p.m.
Indiana at Toronto, 7:30p.m.
Brooklyn at Miami, 8p.m.
Chicago at Cleveland, 8p.m.
Milwaukee at Memphis, 8p.m.
Oklahoma City at Denver, 9p.m.
Houston at Portland, 10p.m.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
Detroit 122, Atlanta 101
New York 121, Charlotte 106
Sacramento 110, Indiana 109
Boston 125, Utah 97
Memphis 132, Brooklyn 120
Golden State 118, Miami 104
Oklahoma City 118, Orlando 102
Phoenix 125, Minnesota 116
Dallas 110, Houston 91
San Antonio 133, Portland 96
Philadelphia 126, L.A. Lakers 121

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

MEN'S NIT
TUESDAY'S SEMIFINALS
at Madison Square Garden, New York
Xavier vs. Saint Bonaventure, 7p.m.
Washington St. vs. Texas A&M, 9:30p.m.
WEDNESDAY'S QUARTERFINALS
Texas A&M 67, Wake Forest 52
Washington State 77, BYU 58

THE BASKETBALL CLASSIC
SATURDAY'S QUARTERFINAL
Portland vs. Southern Utah, 6p.m.
MONDAY'S SEMIFINAL
Coastal Carolina at S. Alabama, 8p.m.
WEDNESDAY'S QUARTERFINAL
Fresno State 80, Youngstown State 71

WOMEN'S NCAA TOURNAMENT
GREENSBORO REGIONAL
Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, N.C.
Friday's Regional Semifinals
South Carolina vs. North Carolina, 7 p.m.
Iowa State vs. Creighton, 9:30p.m.
Sunday, Regional Championship
WICHITA REGIONAL
At Intrust Bank Arena, Wichita, Kan.
Saturday's Regional Semifinals
Louisville vs. Tennessee, 4p.m.
South Dakota vs. Michigan, 6:30p.m.
Monday Regional Championship
SPOKANE REGIONAL
At Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena
Friday's Regional Semifinals
Stanford vs. Maryland, 9:30p.m.
Texas vs. Ohio State, 7p.m.
Sunday, Regional Championship
BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL
Total Mortgage, Bridgeport, Conn.
Saturday's Regional Semifinals
NC State vs. Notre Dame, 11:30 a.m.
UConn vs. Indiana, 2p.m.
Monday, Regional Championship

WOMEN'S NIT
THURSDAY'S THIRD ROUND
Alabama 79, Houston 64
Columbia 54, Boston College 51
Seton Hall 78, Drexel 71
Vanderbilt vs. Middle Tenn., late
Toledo vs. Marquette, late
Drake vs. South Dakota State, late
UCLA vs. Wyoming, late
New Mexico vs. Oregon State, late

SOCCER

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

EASTERN	W	L	T	PT	GF	GA
Philadelphia	3	0	1	10	7	2
Columbus	2	0	2	8	10	5
Chicago	2	0	2	8	5	1
N.Y. Red Bulls	2	1	1	7	8	4
Orlando City	2	1	1	7	4	2
Atlanta	2	1	1	7	8	8
D.C. United	2	2	0	6	5	4
Cincinnati	2	2	0	6	5	8
New York City FC	1	2	1	4	4	4
New England	1	2	1	4	6	8
Toronto FC	1	2	1	4	5	8
Charlotte FC	1	3	0	3	4	7
CF Montréal	0	3	1	1	5	11
Inter Miami CF	0	3	1	1	2	10
WESTERN	**W**	**L**	**T**	**PT**	**GF**	**GA**
Los Angeles FC	3	0	1	10	9	2
Real Salt Lake	3	0	1	10	6	3
Minnesota United	2	0	2	8	4	2
Austin FC	2	1	1	7	11	3
FC Dallas	2	1	1	7	7	3
Colorado	2	1	1	7	6	4
LA Galaxy	2	2	0	6	4	4
Houston	1	1	2	5	3	3
Portland	1	1	2	5	5	7
Seattle	1	2	1	4	4	5
Nashville	1	2	1	4	3	5
Kansas City	1	3	0	3	3	8
San Jose	0	3	1	1	4	9
Vancouver	0	3	1	1	2	9

Three points for win, one point for tie.

SATURDAY'S MATCHES
Cincinnati at Charlotte FC, 5 p.m.
Real Salt Lake at Sporting KC, 7 p.m.

SUNDAY'S MATCH
Orlando City at Portland, 4 p.m.

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE
SATURDAY, APRIL 2
Liverpool vs. Watford, 7:30a.m.
Brighton vs. Norwich, 10a.m.
Burnley vs. Man City, 10a.m.
Chelsea vs. Brentford, 10a.m.
Leeds vs. Southampton, 10a.m.
Wolverhampton vs. Aston Villa, 10a.m.
Man United vs. Leicester, 12:30p.m.

U.S. MEN'S SCHEDULE
q-Thursday: at Mexico, at Aztec Stadium, Mexico City, late.
q-Sunday: vs. Panama, at Exploria Stadium, Orlando, Fla., 7 p.m.
q-Wednesday: at Costa Rcia, at Estadio Nacional de Costa Rica, San Jose, 9 p.m.
q-World Cup qualifying

GOLF

WGC DELL TECHNOLOGIES MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP
Thursday's second round rund-robin play at Austin (Texas) Country Club.

G	GOLFER (SD)	REC	SC
1	Patrick Reed (23)	0-1-1	vs.
1	Sebastián Muñoz (58)	0-1-1	**tied**
1	Jon Rahm (1)	2- 0- 0	d.
1	Cameron Young (40)	1-1-0	**5&4**
2	Collin Morikawa (2)	1-0-1	vs.
2	Sergio Garcia (43)	1-0-1	**tied**
2	Jason Kokrak (22)	1-1-0	d.
2	Robert MacIntyre (61)	0-2-0	**3&2**
3	Viktor Hovland (3)	2-0-0	d.
3	Cameron Tringale (45)	0-2-0	**2&1**
3	Sepp Straka (63)	1-1-0	d.
3	Will Zalatoris (24)	1-1-0	**4&2**
4	Seamus Power (42)	2-0-0	d.
4	Patrick Cantlay (4)	0-1-1	**5&4**
4	Sungjae Im (21)	1-1-0	d.
4	Keith Mitchell (62)	0-1-1	**5&3**
5	Tommy Fleetwood (41)	1-1-0	d.
5	Scottie Scheffler (5)	1-1-0	**2&1**
5	Matt Fitzpatrick (20)	2-0-0	d.
5	Ian Poulter (59)	0-2-0	**4&2**
6	Justin Thomas (6)	1-1-0	d.
6	Marc Leishman (37)	0-1-0	**5&4**
6	Kevin Kisner (29)	2-0-0	d.
6	Luke List (53)	1-1-0	**1up**
7	Lucas Herbert (39)	2-0-0	d.
7	Xander Schauffele (7)	1-1-0	**1up**
7	Takumi Kanaya (56)	1-1-0	d.
7	Tony Finau (18)	0-2-0	**1up**
8	Mackenzie Hughes (51)	1-1-0	d.
8	Max Homa (30)	1-1-0	**1up**
8	Dustin Johnson (8)	2-0-0	d.
8	Matthew Wolff (38)	0-2-0	**4&2**
9	Lee Westwood (47)	1-1-0	d.
9	Bryson DeChambeau (9)	0-1-1	**1up**
9	Richard Bland (54)	1-0-1	d.
9	Talor Gooch (27)	1-1-0	**1up**
10	Corey Conners (36)	2-0-0	d.
10	Louis Oosthuizen (10)	0-2-0	**2&1**
10	Alex noren (50)	2-0-0	d.
10	Paul Casey (19)	0-2-0	**con**
11	Justin Rose (46)	1-1-0	d
11	Jordan Spieth (11)	1-1-0	**3&2**
11	Adam Scott (32)	1-0-1	vs.
11	Keegan Bradley (60)	0-1-1	**tied**
12	Billy Horschel (12)	2-0-0	d.
12	Tom Hoge (33)	0-2-0	**3&2**
12	Min Woo Lee (49)	1-1-0	d.
12	Thomas Pieters (26)	1-1-0	**1up**
13	Tyrrell Hatton (13)	2-0-0	d.
13	Si Woo Kim (48)	1-1-0	**1up**
13	Daniel Berger (17)	1-1-0	d.
13	Christiaan Bezuidenhout (52)	0-2-0	**2&1**
14	Joaquin Niemann (14)	1-1-0	d.
14	Russell Henley (34)	0-2-0	**2&1**
14	Maverick McNealy (64)	1-0-1	vs.
14	Kevin Na (25)	1-0-1	**tied**
15	Abraham Ancer (15)	1-0-1	vs.
15	Brian Harman (44)	0-1-1	**tied**
15	Bubba Watson (57)	1-1-0	d.
15	Webb Simpson (31)	1-1-0	**1up**
16	Brooks Koepka (16)	2-0-0	d.
16	Harold Varner III (35)	1-1-0	**2&1**
16	Shane Lowry (28)	1-1-0	d.
16	Erik van Rooyen (55)	0-2-0	**2up**

FRIDAY'S ROUND 3 GROUPINGS
10:20 a.m.: Horschel vs. Pieters
10:31 a.m.: Hoge vs. Min Woo Lee
10:42 a.m.: Scheffler vs. Fitzpatrick
10:53 a.m.: Fleetwood vs. Poulter
11:04 a.m.: Hatton vs. Berger
11:15 a.m.: Si Woo Kim vs. Bezuidenhout
11:26 a.m.; Cantlay vs. Sungjae Im
11:37 a.m.: S. Power vs. Mitchell
11:48 a.m.: DeChambeau vs. Gooch
11:59 a.m.: Westwood vs. Bland
12:10 p.m.: Du. Johnson vs. Homa
12:21 p.m.: Wolff vs. Hughes
12:32 p.m.: Koepka vs. Sh. Lowry
12:43 p.m.: Varner III vs. van Rooyen
12:54 p.m.: Rahm vs. P. Reed
1:05 p.m.: Cam. Young vs. S. Muñoz
1:16 p.m.: Spieth vs. A. Scott
1:27 p.m.: Rose vs. Bradley
1:38 p.m.: Jus. Thomas vs. Kisner
1:49 p.m.: Leishman vs. List
2 p.m.: Niemann vs. K. Na
2:11 p.m.: Henley vs. McNealy
2:22 p.m.: Hovland vs. Zalatoris
2:33 p.m.: Tringale vs. Straka
2:44 p.m.: C.Conners vs. A. Noren
2:55 p.m.: Schauffele vs. Finau
3:06 p.m.: Herbert vs. Kanaya
3:17 p.m.: Ancer vs. Simpson
3:28 p.m.: Harman vs. B. Watson
3:39 p.m.: Morikawa vs. Kokrak
3:50 p.m.: Ser. Garcia vs. MacIntyre
-- Oosthuizen vs. Paul Casey con

The winner of each group advances to the knockout stage of 18-hole matches.

MLB

SPRING TRAINING

AMERICAN LEAGUE	W	L	PCT.
Kansas City	5	0	1.000
Boston	6	1	.857
Texas	4	1	.800
Toronto	4	2	.667
Chicago	5	3	.625
Cleveland	3	3	.500
Los Angeles	4	3	.571
Baltimore	2	3	.400
Detroit	2	3	.400
Seattle	2	3	.400
Minnesota	3	5	.375
New York	2	4	.333
Houston	1	4	.200
Oakland	1	4	.200
Tampa Bay	0	5	.000
NATIONAL LEAGUE	**W**	**L**	**PCT.**
Miami	4	1	.800
St. Louis	4	1	.800
Atlanta	3	1	.750
Cincinnati	5	2	.714
Philadelphia	3	2	.600
Pittsburgh	3	2	.600
Chicago	4	3	.571
Milwaukee	3	3	.500
New York	2	2	.500
Colorado	3	4	.429
Arizona	3	5	.375
San Diego	2	4	.333
San Francisco	2	4	.333
Los Angeles	1	3	.250
Washington	1	4	.200

Standings do no reflect ties

THURSDAY'S RESULTS
Detroit 5, N.Y. Yankees 3
Minnesota 7, Tampa Bay 1
Philadelphia 3, Pittsburgh 3
Atlanta at Toronto, ppd.
Kansas City 5, Cincinnati 4
Seattle 3, Cleveland 2
Texas 5, Oakland 3
L.A. Angels 5, Chi. Cubs 4
L.A. Dodgers 6, Colorado 6
San Francisco 9, Chi. White Sox 6
Arizona 10, Milwaukee 3
Boston vs. Baltimore, late.
Houston vs. Washington, late.
Miami vs. N.Y. Mets, late

FRIDAY'S GAMES
Boston vs. Atlanta, 1:05p.m.
N.Y. Yankees vs. Philadelphia, 1:05p.m.
Minnesota vs. Pittsburgh, 1:05p.m.
Washington vs. St. Louis., 1:05p.m.
Baltimore vs. Tampa Bay, 1:05p.m.
Detroit vs. Toronto, 1:07p.m.
Colorado vs. Chi. Cubs 4:05p.m.
Milwaukee vs. Oakland, 4:05p.m.
Cleveland vs. San Francisco, 4:05p.m.
Texas vs. Kansas City, 4:05p.m.
L.A. Angels vs. Arizona, 4:10p.m.
N.Y. Mets vs. Houston, 6:05p.m.
San Diego vs. L.A. Dodgers, 9:05p.m.
Chi. White Sox vs. Seattle, 9:40p.m.

AUTO RACING

NASCAR CUP SERIES LEADERS
MANUFACTURERS STANDINGS

RK	MAKE	PTS	PB	W
1	Ford	182	--	3
2	Chevrolet	173	-9	2
3	Toyota	163	-19	0

DRIVER POINT STANDINGS

DRIVER	W	T5	T10	PTS
Chase Elliott	0	0	3	171
Joey Logano	0	1	3	164
Chase Briscoe	1	2	2	156
William Byron	1	2	2	150
Kurt Busch	0	2	3	148
Ryan Blaney	0	2	2	148
Aric Almirola	0	1	3	144
Martin Truex, Jr.	0	0	2	142
Alex Bowman	1	1	2	140
Ross Chastain	0	3	3	137
Kyle Busch	0	1	3	136
Kyle Larson	1	2	2	135
Daniel Suarez	0	2	3	127
Kevin Harvick	0	0	2	127
Tyler Reddick	0	1	2	126
Brad Keselowski	0	0	1	122

PGA CORALES PUNTACANA CHAMPIONSHIP
1st of 4 rounds, Corales GC, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 7,670 yards, Par 72

Ben Martin	36-30—66	-6
Adam Schenk	33-34—67	-5
Kiradech Aphibarnrat	34-34—68	-4
Hayden Buckley	32-36—68	-4
Graeme McDowell	34-34—68	-4
Vaughn Taylor	33-35—68	-4
Ryan Armour	35-34—69	-3
Thomas Detry	32-37—69	-3
Nate Lashley	34-35—69	-3
David Lingmerth	33-36—69	-3
Greyson Sigg	34-35—69	-3
Alex Smalley	34-35—69	-3
Martin Trainer	34-35—69	-3
Brandon Wu	34-35—69	-3
Dominic Bozzelli	34-36—70	-2
Wesley Bryan	35-35—70	-2
Jonathan Byrd	34-36—70	-2
Wyndham Clark	34-36—70	-2
Jason Dufner	32-38—70	-2
Tommy Gainey	34-36—70	-2
Robert Garrigus	36-34—70	-2
Brandon Hagy	35-35—70	-2
Bryson Nimmer	35-35—70	-2
Andrew Novak	35-35—70	-2
Chad Ramey	35-35—70	-2
Seth Reeves	35-35—70	-2
Chase Seiffert	35-35—70	-2
Brian Stuard	35-35—70	-2
D.J. Trahan	35-35—70	-2
Jhonattan Vegas	32-38—70	-2
Vince Whaley	33-37—70	-2
Scott Brown	35-36—71	-1
Joel Dahmen	35-36—71	-1
Tyler Duncan	34-37—71	-1
J.J. Henry	34-37—71	-1
Hank Lebioda	36-35—71	-1
Seung-Yul Noh	34-37—71	-1
Sean O'Hair	35-36—71	-1
Cameron Percy	33-38—71	-1
David Skinns	35-36—71	-1
Sahith Theegala	35-36—71	-1
Danny Willett	35-36—71	-1
Rafael Campos	36-36—72	E
Joshua Creel	35-37—72	E
Andrew Filbert	34-38—72	E
Patrick Flavin	34-38—72	E
Michael Gligic	35-37—72	E
Bill Haas	34-38—72	E
Mark Hubbard	36-36—72	E
Ben Kohles	36-36—72	E
Rick Lamb	36-36—72	E
D.A. Points	35-37—72	E
Aaron Rai	38-34—72	E
Doc Redman	37-35—72	E
Roger Sloan	34-38—72	E
Kevin Stadler	34-38—72	E
Callum Tarren	33-39—72	E
Nick Taylor	37-35—72	E
Curtis Thompson	35-37—72	E
Bronson Burgoon	35-38—73	+1
Greg Chalmers	35-38—73	+1
Kevin Chappell	33-40—73	+1
Austin Cook	35-38—73	+1
Brett Drewitt	35-38—73	+1
Fabian Gomez	38-35—73	+1
Scott Gutschewski	36-37—73	+1
Nick Hardy	37-36—73	+1
Kramer Hickok	36-37—73	+1
Nicolai Hojgaard	35-38—73	+1
Rasmus Hojgaard	37-36—73	+1
John Huh	35-38—73	+1
Jim Knous	37-36—73	+1
Hao-Tong Li	36-37—73	+1
David Lipsky	36-37—73	+1
Trey Mullinax	36-37—73	+1
Grayson Murray	36-37—73	+1
Matthias Schwab	37-36—73	+1
Jared Wolfe	37-36—73	+1
Dylan Wu	35-38—73	+1
Michael Balcar	37-37—74	+2
Brice Garnett	37-37—74	+2
Emiliano Grillo	38-36—74	+2
Juan Jose Guerra	35-39—74	+2
David Hearn	39-35—74	+2
Bo Hoag	36-38—74	+2
Richard S Johnson	34-40—74	+2
Justin Lower	37-37—74	+2
George McNeill	38-36—74	+2
Victor Perez	38-36—74	+2
Willy Pumarol	37-37—74	+2
Manuel Relancio	35-39—74	+2
Patrick Rodgers	37-37—74	+2
Adam Svensson	35-39—74	+2
Hudson Swafford	38-36—74	+2
Bo Van Pelt	36-38—74	+2
Camilo Villegas	38-36—74	+2

WORLD GOLF RANKINGS

RK.	GOLFER	COUNTRY	AVG
1.	Jon Rahm	Spain	8.19
2.	Collin Morikawa	U.S.	7.78
3.	Viktor Hovland	Norway	7.59
4.	Patrick Cantlay	U.S.	7.07
5.	Scottie Scheffler	U.S.	6.96
6.	Cameron Smith	Australia	6.86
7.	Justin Thomas	U.S.	5.73
8.	Rory McIlroy	N. Ireland	5.72
9.	Xander Schauffele	U.S.	5.45
10.	Sam Burns	U.S.	5.29
11.	Dustin Johnson	U.S.	5.28
12.	Hideki Matsuyama	Japan	5.12
13.	Bryson DeChambeau	U.S.	4.62
14.	Louis Oosthuizen	S. Africa	4.50
15.	Jordan Spieth	U.S.	4.46
16.	Billy Horschel	U.S.	4.37
17.	Tyrrell Hatton	England	4.33
18.	Joaquin Niemann	Chile	4.21
19.	Abraham Ancer	Mexico	4.16
20.	Brooks Koepka	U.S.	4.16
21.	Daniel Berger	U.S.	4.15
22.	Harris English	U.S.	4.10
23.	Tony Finau	U.S.	4.04
24.	Paul Casey	England	3.94
25.	Matt Fitzpatrick	U.S.	3.92
26.	Sungjae Im	S. Korea	3.91
27.	Jason Kokrak	U.S.	3.61
28.	Patrick Reed	U.S.	3.17
29.	Will Zalatoris	U.S.	3.11
30.	Kevin Na	U.S.	3.07
31.	Thomas Pieters	Belgium	2.95
32.	Talor Gooch	U.S.	2.89

NATIONAL SPORTS REPORT

SHORTS

2nd grand jury doesn't indict Watson



A second grand jury in Texas declined Thursday to indict new Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson, who has been accused of sexual misconduct by 22 women and still faces civil lawsuits. As Watson arrived in Cleveland to undergo a physical and meet with coaches, the grand jury in Brazoria County listened to evidence related to a criminal complaint filed by one of the 22 women. The district attorney later announced that the grand jury declined to charge Watson. "Accordingly, this matter is closed," Brazoria County District Attorney Tom Selleck said in a statement. Only hours earlier, Watson arrived at the Browns' headquarters in Berea, Ohio, wearing an orange throwback team jacket. His arrival was delayed so Watson could give depositions Tuesday and Wednesday in Houston in the civil lawsuits. Two weeks ago, a grand jury in Harris County, Texas, where Houston is located, declined to indict the former Texans QB on criminal charges after considering evidence related to nine criminal complaints that had been filed with Houston police. Watson has maintained his innocence.

What's next for Barty? 'Wait and see'



Ash Barty signaled the end of the photo opportunities at her retirement news conference in her typically low-fuss, matter-of-fact style: "Righto, that'll do." A day after revealing in a video posted on social media that she was quitting the women's tennis tour after spending the last two years atop the rankings, and winning two of the last three Grand Slam singles titles, the 25-year-old Barty held a news conference Thursday in downtown Brisbane, Australia. Barty's decision to retire surprised almost everyone involved in the sport, and prompted the obvious question: why now? In the Instagram video she'd alluded to the dreams and challenges that lay ahead. Those who pressed for a few more details in the official news conference were met with a repeated response: "You'll have to wait and see. Be patient." Barty does have a wedding date locked in — she announced her engagement to aspiring golfer Garry Kissick in November — but she's not making it public yet. Another future project is spending more time working with Indigenous children, Barty said, because "that's what lights me up inside."

Baffert makes move ahead of Derby



Bob Baffert transferred four of his promising 3-year-old colts to other trainers, which will allow them to earn qualifying points for the Kentucky Derby while the Hall of Fame trainer appeals his 90-day suspension. Baffert on Thursday transferred Messier, Doppelganger and McLaren Vale to trainer Tim Yakteen, who's based at Santa Anita in Southern California. Blackadder was sent to Kentucky to train under Rodolphe Brisset. All four colts are owned by SF Racing LLC and others. The moves came four days after a Kentucky judge denied Baffert's request to stay his 90-day suspension but delayed it until April 4 to allow his attorneys to seek emergency relief through the state's Court of Appeals. Kentucky Horse Racing Commission stewards last month suspended Baffert for 90 days, fined him $7,500, and disqualified the late Medina Spirit for having the corticosteroid betamethasone in his system when he won the Kentucky Derby last year. Baffert's suspension was originally set to begin March 8. Baffert's attorneys said they would immediately appeal. *—Associated Press*



Former Cub Kris Bryant joins the Rockies after spending the final two months of last season with the Giants. **MATT YORK/AP**

BASEBALL

Here's to new beginnings

Free agency's big names reshape teams, divisions

By Rob Maaddi
Associated Press

Many familiar faces with impressive resumes are in new places following one of major league baseball's wildest free agent frenzies.

Max Scherzer and Corey Seager got megadeals before the lockout.

Freddie Freeman had to wait until spring training to get his lucrative contract.

Trevor Story jumped leagues and changed positions.

Nick Castellanos switched red pinstripes.

Kris Bryant stayed in the National League West. Carlos Correa stayed in the American League.

Fans may need to pull out their programs to go with those cold beers, hot dogs and Cracker Jack to keep track of who ended up where.

A look at some of the many moves:

Max Scherzer

The three-time Cy Young Award winner and eight-time All-Star returned to the NL East, signing a three-year, $130 million deal with the Mets. He's coming off a 15-4, 2.46 ERA season split between with the Nationals and the Dodgers.

Corey Seager

The two-time All-Star shortstop and 2020 World Series MVP got the richest deal, a 10-year, $325 million contract to leave the Dodgers for the Rangers. He joined Gold Glove second baseman Marcus Semien on the Rangers. Semien, who hit 45 homers for the Blue Jays last year, got a seven-year, $175 million contract from the Rangers hours before Seager on Dec. 1.

Freddie Freeman

The 2020 NL MVP is out of Atlanta after helping the Braves win the World Series, heading back home to play for the Dodgers, who gave him a six-year, $162 million contract. Freeman's decision to leave came after the Braves acquired first baseman Matt Olson from the A's.

Trevor Story

A four-time All-Star shortstop for the Rockies, Story signed a six-year, $140 million contract with the Red Sox to play second base. He joins shortstop Xander Bogaerts to form a powerful middle infield.

Kris Bryant

The Rockies signed the versatile former NL MVP and rookie of the year while with the Cubs, giving him a seven-year, $182 million contract. Bryant was traded from the Cubs to the Giants last season after making his fourth All-Star game.

Robbie Ray

After winning the AL Cy Young Award with the Blue Jays, the lefthander got a five-year, $115 million contract from the Mariners.

Carlos Correa

A two-time All-Star shortstop and the AL 2015 AL rookie of the year, Correa left the Astros for the Twins, getting a three-year, $105.3 million contract. But Correa can opt out after the 2022 and 2023 seasons to become a free agent again.

Nick Castellanos

The 2021 All-Star outfield got a five-year, $100 million contract from the Phillies after a career season with the Reds. Castellanos joined slugger Kyle Schwarber, who received a four-year, $79 million deal from the Phillies.

Kenley Jansen

The longtime Dodgers closer and three-time All-Star with 350 career saves joined the defending champion Braves on a one-year, $18 million deal.

Jorge Soler

The 2021 World Series MVP remained in the NL East, signing a three-year, $36 million contract with the Marlins. Soler led the AL with 48 homers in 2019 for the Royals.

Nelson Cruz

The veteran designated hitter is back in the NL where he spent his first season in 2005 with the Brewers. The Nationals gave the 41-year-old Cruz a $12 million salary for this year, and the deal includes a $16 million mutual option for 2023 with a $3 million buyout.

NCAA WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT SWEET 16

Big Ten hopeful droughts will end

By Doug Feinberg | Associated Press

It has been seven years since the Big Ten had a team reach the Final Four and more than two decades since the conference had a national champion in women's basketball.

With the conference having four teams in the Sweet 16 for a second consecutive year, those streaks could be ending soon.

Michigan, Indiana, Ohio State and Maryland are all playing in the regional semifinals this weekend — matching the ACC for most teams left in the NCAA Tournament.



Michigan coach Kim Barnes Arico instructs guard Amy Dilk last week during the team's win over American. **CARLOS OSORIO/AP**

All four coaches credit the toughness of the conference as one of the main reasons for the success they've had so far on the game's biggest stage.

"I think the biggest thing is we prepare each other for these moments," Indiana coach Teri Moren said. "It's so good and so competitive that we're prepared for these games.

"The Big Ten prepares us for all these opponents we're seeing right now."

Indiana reached the regional final last season and has most of its team back from that run. The Hoosiers face UConn on Saturday in the Sweet 16.

Maryland, which faces Stanford on Friday, was the last team from the Big Ten to reach the Final Four, doing so in 2014.

Coach Brenda Frese knows how important it can be to have made it to the regionals before.

"You have to gain that experience to get to the Sweet 16s and get to an Elite Eight like Indiana last year," Frese said. "Your roster has to get that experience. That's the cool thing to see now back-to-back years four teams making it to the Sweet 16.

"Teams are gaining a ton of experience to understand these rounds and how difficult it is."

Michigan, which faces South Dakota on Saturday, is playing in its second straight Sweet 16 after never making it that far before.

"I've said it since I got here, the quote Geno (Auriemma) gave me 20 years ago. It's easy to get there, the hard part is staying there," Wolverines coach Kim Barnes Arico said. "When you have a league that has back-to-back four teams in the Sweet 16, it really speaks to you staying there and having arrived."

All of the coaches are rooting for each other to succeed. As soon as the other Big Ten schools advanced, Frese tweeted out her excitement for them.

"Brenda has been a real champion of this and is 100% right," Ohio State coach Kevin McGuff said. "A lot of the other leagues out there have TV networks that trumpet their teams. We have to similarly as coaches promoting how good we are. We know how good we are. Everyone knows it as well."

The sixth-seeded Buckeyes will face Texas on Friday.

With the four women's teams advancing to the Sweet 16 and a couple of Big Ten men's teams still playing also, it will be a busy next few days for Big Ten Commissioner Kevin Warren.

Warren plans to try to take in as many of the remaining games as he possibly can in person while watching others on his phone.

He believes his conference is really close to breaking its national semifinals drought.

"We are on the forefront of putting teams in the Final Four on a regular basis and winning national championships," Warren said in a phone interview earlier in the week.

"I look forward to seeing them go into the Final Four and look forward to the day when I see when the national championship trophy is handed to them."

Warren also made changes in the conference office this season, hiring Megan Kahn in November to be the conference's vice president of women's basketball.

"That showed the true commitment from Kevin Warren, our commissioner, who is passionate about women's hoops," Moren said.

"Him hiring her and really making this a position exclusive for women's basketball is a huge deal."

Warren said creating that position was one of his top goals when he got hired.

"I had a list of transition initiatives and that was a top one," he said.

"The first year we had to deal with COVID, so it got delayed."

He also has spent the last two years developing relationships with many of the coaches and players. He went to all of the women's games at the conference tournament and constantly texts them before and after games.

"They know I'm there. They know I can't be in two places at once or I'd be there," he said. "I'll see Indiana this weekend.

"Hopefully all four of our teams win, so I can figure out where to go."

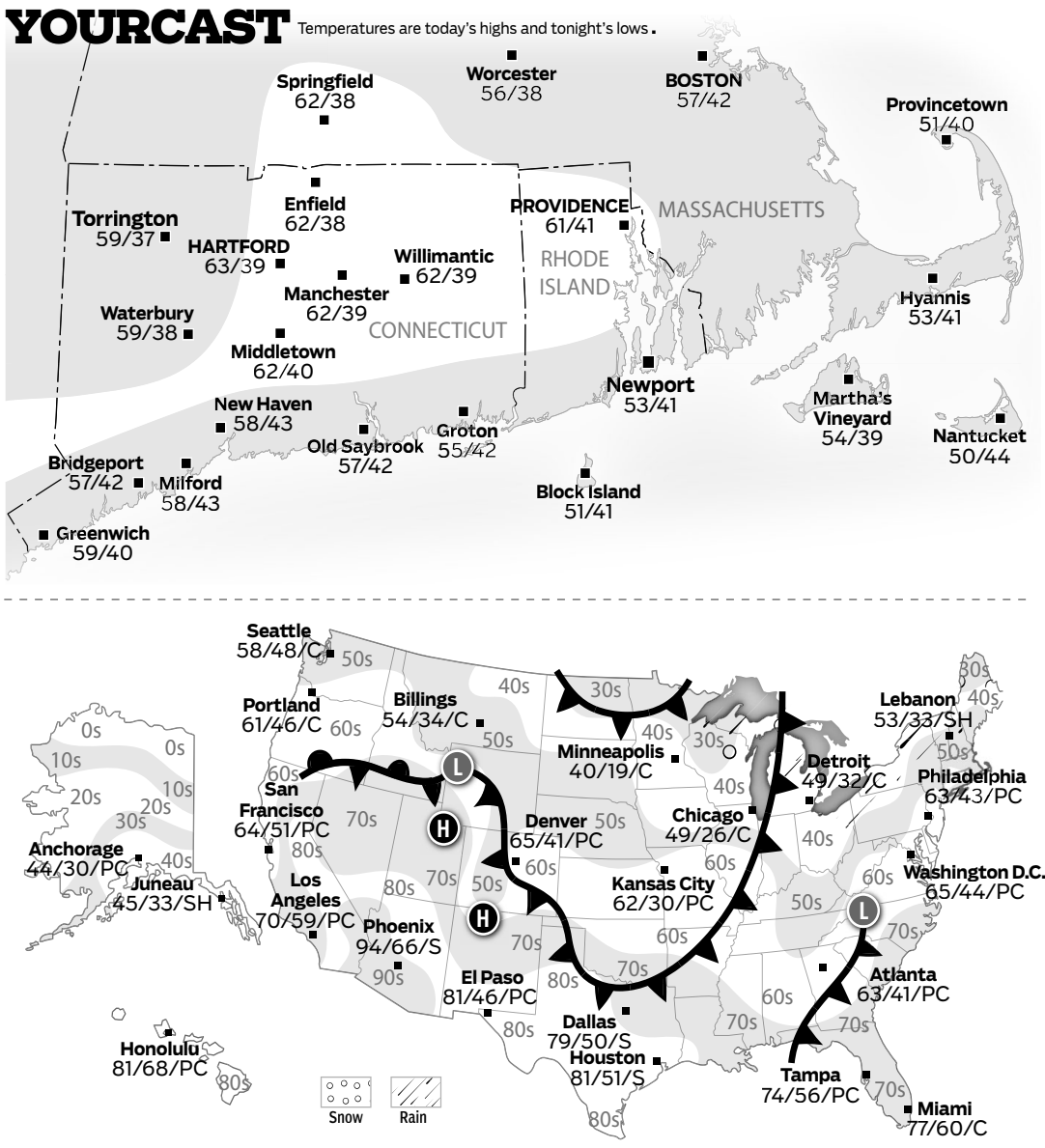
WEATHER

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET
Partly sunny and mild. West wind at 5 to 10 mph.	Thickening cloudiness, chance for afternoon showers.	Variable cloudiness, a shower is possible, breezy.	Partly sunny, windy and chilly.	Sunny and breezy.
HIGH 63° LOW 39°	HIGH 54° LOW 36°	HIGH 46° LOW 23°	HIGH 34° LOW 20°	HIGH 42° LOW 25°

CONNECTICUT WEATHER
For the latest weather news throughout your day.
courant.com/weather

YOURCAST

Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



OUTLOOK

It's been said that "Good things come to those who wait", but at the same time it's also been said "Good things come to those who wait, but not always when you want". That is our predicament with Friday's weather. High pressure will bring a partly sunny sky and high temperatures in the low to mid-60s. It certainly would be appreciated more if the warmer and dry conditions would hold off until the weekend, but that won't be the case. A cold front will approach the region on Saturday causing thickening cloudiness with scattered afternoon and evening showers.

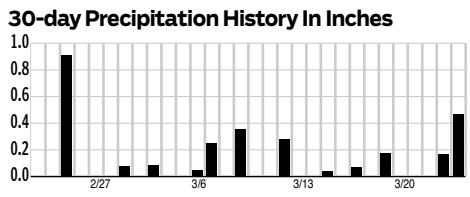
-Gary Lessor

ALMANAC

Precipitation In Inches	Total	Normal
Yesterday (by 7 p.m.)	0.64	0.12
Month to date	2.04	2.99
Total this year	8.35	9.40
Snowfall In Inches		
Yesterday (by 4 p.m.)	0.0	0.2
Total this year	31.5	49.5

Precipitation, temperature at Windsor Locks

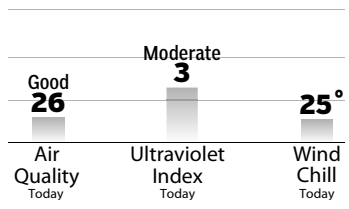
30-day Precipitation History In Inches



Tides	High	Low	Temp.
N.L. State Pier	3:45 a.m.	10:41 a.m.	45°
	4:22 p.m.	10:51 p.m.	
Saybrook Jetty	4:56 a.m.	11:34 a.m.	44°
	5:33 p.m.	11:44 p.m.	
Connecticut River at Portland	7:39 a.m.	2:22 a.m.	
	8:16 p.m.	3:20 p.m.	
Madison	5:11 a.m.	11:40 a.m.	43°
	5:55 p.m.	11:59 p.m.	
New Haven	5:31 a.m.	a.m.	42°
	6:15 p.m.	12:04 p.m.	
Stamford	5:35 a.m.	a.m.	42°
	6:19 p.m.	12:18 p.m.	

River Stage at Hartford: 10.48 feet at 6:30 p.m.

Air Quality Forecast For Today



	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise	6:46 a.m.	6:45 a.m.
Sunset	7:07 p.m.	7:09 p.m.
Moonrise	2:52 a.m.	3:50 a.m.
Moonset	11:37 a.m.	12:45 p.m.

Moon Phase

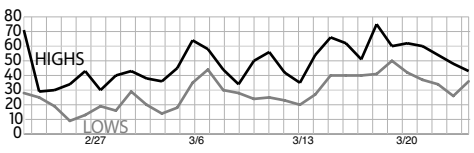
New Apr 1 · First Apr 9 · Full Apr 16 · Last Apr 23

Boating	L.I. Sound W	L.I. Sound E	B. I. Sound
Weather	PCloudy	PCloudy	PCloudy
Wind	W, 5-15	W, 10-15	W, 5-15
Seas	1 ft.	2-3 ft.	4-6 ft.

Temperature	High	Low
Thursday	43 at 3:59 p.m	36 at 6:16 a.m
Normal for date	50	31
Record for date	74 in 1988	7 in 1906
A year ago	64	34
Range this year	76	-2

Heating Degree Days	Season	Normal	Last Season
For July 1 - March 24	4559	5019	4738

30-day Temperature History



Atmosphere	High	Low
Barometer	30.21 at 12 a.m.	29.88 at 7 p.m.
Dew point	41° at 7 p.m.	32° at 12 a.m.

AROUND THE WORLD

Today's forecast in cities not included in the maps above:

NEW ENGLAND			
Bangor	43	31	C
Burlington	45	34	SH
Caribou	39	24	SN
Concord	54	34	C
Montpelier	47	31	SH
Mt. Wash.	28	16	SH
Portland	49	36	PC
Woods Hole	53	40	PC

NATION			
Albany	54	35	C
Albuquerque	73	45	S
Atlantic City	61	41	PC
Baltimore	63	41	PC
Bismarck	49	15	S
Boise	70	45	PC
Buffalo	45	34	C
Charleston	72	48	PC
Cincinnati	49	34	C
Cleveland	44	35	SH
Indianapolis	48	30	C
Jacksonville	76	47	PC
Las Vegas	90	64	S
Miami Beach	76	64	C
Milwaukee	46	25	C
Nashville	56	36	C
New Orleans	73	53	S
New York	61	44	PC
Okla. City	74	45	S
Omaha	58	25	S
Orlando	77	54	PC
Pittsburgh	49	33	SH
Raleigh	69	43	C
St. Louis	61	36	C
Salt Lake City	75	51	PC
San Antonio	86	53	S
San Diego	73	61	PC
San Juan	84	73	SH
Tucson	91	56	S

WORLD			
Amsterdam	63	37	S
Athens	70	43	S
Bangkok	95	82	T
Barbados	84	72	PC
Beijing	63	41	C
Beirut	59	49	SH
Berlin	63	39	PC
Bermuda	74	67	PC
Budapest	67	39	S
Buenos Aires	64	52	SH
Cairo	65	48	PC
Cancun	78	67	PC
Dubai	95	73	S
Dublin	57	39	PC
Edinburgh	59	34	PC
Helsinki	48	19	PC
Hong Kong	73	70	SH
Istanbul	52	37	R
Jerusalem	46	39	R
Johannesburg	77	59	T
Kingston	88	75	PC
Lisbon	66	50	PC
London	63	43	S
Madrid	57	46	R
Mexico City	83	55	S
Milan	68	39	S
Montreal	39	37	R
Moscow	46	37	S
Nassau	84	64	T
New Delhi	95	70	S
Paris	64	45	S
Prague	63	34	S
Rio de Janeiro	95	68	R
Rome	68	41	PC
Seoul	66	50	C
Singapore	93	75	T
Stockholm	56	36	PC
Sydney	73	64	SH
Tel Aviv	61	46	SH
Tokyo	64	52	S
Toronto	46	36	R
Vancouver	54	46	PC
Warsaw	61	39	S

KEY: **S** Sunny, **C** Cloudy, **PC** Partly Cloudy, **R** Rain, **SH** Showers, **SN** Snow, **SF** Snow Flurries, **T** T-storms

Weather page produced by WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY Weather Center



The Bruins' David Pastrnak scores past the Lightning's Andrei Vasilevskiy on Thursday in Boston. **CHARLES KRUPA/AP**

BRUINS 3, LIGHTNING 2

Pastrnak's hat trick lifts Boston over Tampa Bay

By Steve Conroy
Boston Herald

BOSTON — The Bruins shook off a pair of one-goal deficits to overcome the two-time Stanley Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning and nail down a 3-2 victory at a raucous Garden on Thursday night.

The Bruins leapfrogged over the Bolts for third place in the Atlantic Division.

David Pastrnak gave the Bruins their first lead of the game with 4:10 left to go in the third period, his third of the game the brought a shower of hats down from the stands. The B's did a tremendous job of keeping plays alive in the offensive zone until a fat rebound came out to Pastrnak, who rifled it home.

Boston was then able to salt it away when Vasilevskiy was pulled relative ease compared to the difficulty they've had in the recent past.

The Lightning had taken its second lead of the game at 3:51 of the third period on what looked like a nothing play. Jeremy Swayman couldn't clamp down on a rebound in front of him and Nikita Kucherov made a deft play to keep it alive on the backhand. It eventually pinballed out to Steven Stamkos and he buried it from the slot.

But Pastrnak tied it up with his second goal of the game at 8:17. His first goal was a beauty, but this equalizer was a greasy one. From the right side of the net and his back toward the cage, he somehow squeaked a backhander under Andrei Vasilevskiy's stick for his 35th of the season.

Neither team was particularly sharp in the early going and it cost the B's when they had a chance to grab control of the game after Erik Cernak clipped Tomas Nosek with a high stick just 1:20 into the game to earn a double minor.

The Bruins did not get a shot on net on the four-minute advantage that was cut short three seconds by a Craig Smith high-stick. In the first two minutes, the B's couldn't get out of their own way, turning the puck over several times before ever setting up. And when they finally did get some zone time, they could not get the puck through to goalie Andrei Vasilevskiy.

The good news for the B's was that the Bolts' man-advantage did not look much more crisp and they could do nothing while Smith was in the box.

The night marked the Bruin debut of Hampus Lindholm and, from the get-go, it looked like he's going to be big help not only shutting down plays but breaking out the puck from the defensive zone. He would display that skill just a little later.

The B's gained some momentum as the period went on and held a 12-8 shot advantage but there the game was scoreless after one.

The B's power-play problems got worse in the second period and blew up on them.

After Mikhail Sergachev high-sticked Taylor Hall, the Bolts struck for a preventable shorthanded goal. Ondrej Palat broke out on a 2-on-2 with the newly acquired Brandon Hagel. Charlie McAvoy forced Palat to the boards, but Brad Marchand simply drifted away from Hagel. Palat flipped a pass over to the wide open Hagel and he beat a helpless Jeremy Swayman at 7:11.

But the B's got it back at 9:55 on a pretty play. Lindholm collected a puck behind his net and flicked aside a Hagel stick check before dishing up to Erik Haula. Haula made a beautiful cross-ice diagonal pass up to David Pastrnak, who picked it up off the board and beat Ryan McDonagh to break in alone, beating Vasilevskiy over the blocker.

Vasilevskiy made a couple of terrific saves in the period. He robbed an all-alone Curtis Lazar with a a glove save. He was also fortunate. The B's were buzzing after the Pastrnak goal and Smith zipped a nice cross-ice pass down to Trent Frederic but his redirect hit the post.

The B's had a 29-14 shot advantage through two periods, but Swayman had to make a couple of quality saves in the second, including one in the waning seconds on Steven Stamkos with Pastrnak in the box for tripping.

Pastrnak had 47 seconds left in his sentence to start of the third.

THURSDAY'S COLLEGE RESULTS

BASEBALL

BENEDICTINE 4, TRINITY 3

SOFTBALL

TRINITY 7, BUFFALO STATE 2 (6)
TRINITY VS. MANCHESTER, CANCELED
ST. JOSEPH AT SARAH LAWRENCE (2), PPD.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

TRINITY 15, SPRINGFIELD 9

FRIDAY'S COLLEGE SCHEDULE

MEN'S HOCKEY

NCAA Div. I **Tourney**—First Round (Allentown Pa.)
Quinnipiac vs. St. Cloud State, 8p.m.

BASEBALL

Fairfield at Marist, 2p.m.
Rhode Island at UConn, 3p.m.
UMBC at Hartford, 3p.m.
Central at Wagner, 3p.m.
Quinnipiac at St. John's, 3p.m.
Sacred Heart at Merrimack, 3p.m.
Emerson at Wesleyan, 4p.m.
Trinity vs. Middlebury (Winter Haven, Fla.), 5:30p.m.

SOFTBALL

Trinity vs. Grinnell (Clermont, Fla.), 11:15a.m.
Trinity vs. Gustavus Adolphus (Clermont, Fla.), 2:30p.m.
DePaul at UConn, 3p.m.
Eastern at Springfield (2), 3p.m.

MEN'S TENNIS

Trinity vs. Grinnell (Orlando, Fla.), 10 a.m.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Trinity vs. Grinnell (Orlando, Fla.), 10 a.m.

BIG EAST BASEBALL

Standings

Team	CONF	CPCT	OVR	PCT
UConn	0-0	.000	15-4	.789
Creighton	0-0	.000	9-6	.600
Georgetown	0-0	.000	12-8	.600
Butler	0-0	.000	9-11	.450
Xavier	0-0	.000	9-13	.409
St. John's	0-0	.000	7-14	.333
Villanova	0-0	.000	3-13-1	.206
Seton Hall	0-0	.000	1-17	.056

FRIDAY'S SCHEDULE

Villanova at Richmond, 2:30p.m.
Rhode Island at UConn, 3p.m.
Quinnipiac at St. John's, 3p.m.
Northwestern at Butler, 4p.m.
Xavier at Cincinnati, 4p.m.
VMI at Georgetown, 6p.m.
Creighton at Wichita State, time TBA

BIG EAST SOFTBALL

Standings

Team	CONF	CPCT	OVR	PCT
UConn	5-1	.833	15-11	.577
Butler	4-1	.800	16-8	.667
Providence	4-2	.667	17-7	.708
Seton Hall	3-3	.500	11-11	.500
Georgetown	2-2	.500	11-13	.458
DePaul	1-2	.333	11-14	.440
Creighton	1-3	.250	11-10	.524
St. John's	1-5	.167	5-20	.200
Villanova	0-2	.000	10-17	.370

WEDNESDAY'S LATE RESULT

PRINCETON 6, VILLANOVA 5

FRIDAY'S SCHEDULE

DePaul at UConn, 3p.m.
St. John's at Villanova, 3p.m.
Seton Hall at Butler, 3p.m.
Providence at Creighton, 4p.m.

AHL STANDINGS

Atlantic	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	PTS	PCT
Springfield	59	33	19	5	2	73	.619
Providence	54	28	17	3	6	65	.602
Charlotte	60	34	22	4	0	72	.600
Hartford	56	28	21	5	2	63	.563
Hershey	61	30	23	5	3	68	.557
W-B/Scranton	60	27	25	4	4	62	.517
Bridgeport	60	25	25	6	4	60	.500
Lehigh Valley	58	22	26	7	3	54	.466
North	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OTL**	**SOL**	**PTS**	**PCT**
Utica	56	35	14	6	1	77	.688
Laval	53	28	21	3	1	60	.566
Toronto	55	29	22	3	1	62	.564
Rochester	59	30	23	4	2	66	.559
Syracuse	59	29	22	6	2	69	.559
Belleville	55	29	23	3	0	61	.555
Cleveland	59	22	25	8	4	56	.475
Central	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OTL**	**SOL**	**PTS**	**PCT**
Chicago	58	37	11	5	5	84	.724
Manitoba	56	33	18	3	2	71	.634
Milwaukee	61	31	23	4	3	69	.566
Rockford	54	27	23	3	1	58	.537
Grand Rapids	59	26	26	5	2	59	.500
Texas	57	22	24	6	5	55	.482
Iowa	56	23	25	4	4	54	.482
Pacific	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OTL**	**SOL**	**PTS**	**PCT**
Stockton	53	37	11	4	1	79	.745
Ontario	54	34	13	4	3	75	.694
Colorado	56	30	19	4	3	67	.598
Abbotsford	53	29	19	4	1	63	.594
Bakersfield	53	27	17	4	5	63	.594
Henderson	52	25	23	3	1	54	.519
San Diego	53	25	25	2	1	53	.500
San Jose	54	20	30	2	2	44	.407
Tucson	53	18	30	4	1	41	.387

WEDNESDAY'S LATE RESULTS

SPRINGFIELD 3, HARTFORD 1
BRIDGEPORT 4, UTICA 1
HERSHEY 5, LEHIGH VALLEY 1
SYRACUSE 4, CLEVELAND 0
TORONTO 6, W-B/SCRANTON 1
BELLEVILLE 2, LAVAL 1 (SO)
ROCKFORD 5, MANITOBA 3
BAKERSFIELD 4, COLORADO 2
SAN DIEGO 4, TUCSON 3

THURSDAY'S RESULT

ABBOTSFORD AT SAN JOSE, LATE

FRIDAY'S SCHEDULE

Springfield at Hartford, 7p.m.
Charlotte at Cleveland, 7p.m.
Syracuse at Utica, 7p.m.
W-B/Scranton at Belleville, 7p.m.
Lehigh Valley at Laval, 7p.m.
Hershey at Providence, 7p.m.
Toronto at Rochester, 7p.m.
Manitoba at Chicago, 8p.m.
Milwaukee at Texas, 8p.m.
Rockford at Iowa, 8p.m.
Abbotsford at Stockton, 9p.m.
Grand Rapids at Bakersfield, 10p.m.
Tucson at Henderson 10p.m.